THE ROLE OF ECOTOURISM IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

THE CASE OF LENNOX ISLAND FIRST NATION

BY

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Upon successful completion of this thesis the intent is to deliver a copy to the leadership of the Lennox Island First Nation, the ecotourism manager and present a summary to those interested community members. Although I am supposed to be considered the expert, those living on Lennox Island and involved with the ecotourism project are truly the experts and my role as researcher is to be the instrument that reveals their reality. This study has provided me with many personal memories, friendships and valuable lessons in ecotourism, environmental stewardship and community development and for this I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Lennox Island First Nation for allowing me into their traditional territory to conduct this research.

Thank You!

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ABSTRACT

Aboriginal tourism is a form of community development that can benefit First Nations in various dimensions. Given that many Aboriginal communities have a distinct competitive advantage because of their location and unique culture, a growing number of visitors are interested in experiencing Aboriginal tourist destinations. There have been very few explicit links in the literature that examine how Aboriginal tourism impacts overall community development. This research study examines how a community based ecotourism project has impacted overall development of the Lennox Island First Nation. Central to this investigation is the examination of ecotourism as it relates to four key elements of community development, including economic development, empowerment, wellness, and learning. Data was gathered from fifteen in-depth interviews, participant observations and secondary data sources and analyzed thematically. The results revealed that there were a number of areas that ecotourism can impact within the community that are not necessarily related to economic development but are important in overall community development. The results further suggest that when Lennox Island Aboriginal ecotourism is developed in light of a conceptual framework that provides insight into the meaningful dimensions of Aboriginal community development, then purposefully designed ecotourism programs can have planned impacts on areas such as community wellness and learning. When Aboriginal tourism is considered from a comprehensive perspective, where impacts are understood from a social, cultural, political and environmental context, meaningful community development can begin to be realized.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A. An Introduction to the Research

If one follows Aboriginal community development in the media it is difficult not to hear of the tragedy and failed attempts of governments to assist First Nations communities. The government's response to these types of crises is to focus energy on economic development to lift Aboriginal communities out of poverty and desperate social conditions. For instance in Australia, Minister Kevin Andrews of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations states, "policy makers have been very slow to realize that the development of private property and the benefits of workforce participation would be healthy for Indigenous peoples...The way out of welfare is to build workforce participation" (2005). The Canadian government has promoted similar solutions in attempts to improve the social and economic conditions on reserves throughout Canada (Elias, 1991). Various strategies for approaching Aboriginal community development are described in the literature (Cornell & Kalt, 1998) and tourism development is one such strategy that holds promise to improve life for Aboriginal people.

Tourism is a form of community development being considered by many Aboriginal communities around the world. Aboriginal communities that have adopted tourism as a form of community development are attracting the interest of international visitors. This interest is based primarily on the demand for a natural setting and unique, authentic cultural experience (Williams & Richter,

2002). Aboriginal communities in Canada are well suited to cater to these demands, given their distinct cultures and proximity to natural wilderness areas.

There is little doubt that economic benefits can be derived from tourism but these benefits are not the only reason for participation in the industry. Some Aboriginal communities see tourism as a way to diversify their economies as well as provide meaningful community development in other areas. Social, cultural, environmental and political benefits can also be realized from thoughtful, well planned tourism initiatives. Aboriginal tourism development has the potential to provide significant opportunity for positive change, especially where the development is grounded in local knowledge, consistent with community values, and is controlled locally.

When Aboriginal tourism is considered from a comprehensive perspective, where impacts are understood from a social, cultural, political and environmental context, meaningful and sustainable community development can begin to be realized. The Lennox Island First Nation is an Aboriginal community on Prince Edward Island, Canada, where ecotourism has been pursued as a community development project. In 1999, the Lennox Island First Nation embarked on an ecotourism initiative with an attempt to incorporate their knowledge, values, and culture into the design and operation. This research study adopts a broad perspective to explore this initiative as a form of community development.

B. Purpose of this Research

The purpose of this study is to examine how a community based ecotourism project has impacted the overall development of the Lennox Island

First Nation community. Central to this investigation will be an examination of ecotourism as it relates to key elements of Aboriginal community development such as community economic development, community empowerment, community wellness, and community learning.

C. Theoretical Approach

As a former Resource Planner for a Tribal Council that represents ten Aboriginal communities in British Columbia, I became very aware of the frustrations First Nations had with community development. Community development requires, among other things, financial resources (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2002; Elias, 1991) and the member First Nations that I worked with did not have sufficient means to generate funds necessary to control their own development projects. The Tribal Council relied on Federal and Provincial funding for most development initiatives in the communities. These funds were always subject to specific conditions.

It was my experience that government funding was usually subject to conditions that held little regard for the traditional knowledge and practices of the First Nations people. When government funding was received, the Tribal Council attempted to incorporate appropriate social, cultural, environmental and political values and beliefs into the design and implementation of the projects, while still meeting the government's requirements. One project in particular that used government funds, the Gwa-Sala'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation river enhancement project, resulted in so much frustration with regard to the lack of control over the

project's ultimate outcome, that the First Nations community chose to abandon the initiative.

The premise for this research is based on a review of the literature and my own belief that the type of development encouraged in Aboriginal communities by the Government of Canada has failed, with few exceptions, even though large amounts of funding and expertise have been provided (Eversole, 2003; Cornell & Kalt, 1998, 1990; Elias, 1997, 1991). The federal government's focus on economic development is a far different approach to the comprehensive community development upon which Aboriginal peoples have been insisting for decades (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996; Elias, 1991). Changes are needed in the way development is approached in Aboriginal communities and tourism can play an important role.

Considering comprehensive community development entails taking into account the social, cultural, environmental, political, and economic make up of the community. One technique of examining community development is through the work conducted by Bell (2000, 1999a, 1999b). From his twenty years of experience working in northern Canada and facilitating discussions with Aboriginal communities, Bell (1999a) has developed an analytical framework known as the Four C's of community development. The Four C's consist of:

- Community Economic Development
- Community Empowerment
- Community Wellness
- Community Learning

Table 1 illustrates Bell's Four C's (1999a) which are utilized as the theoretical framework for conceptualizing community development for this study.

Table 1: Four C's of Community Development:

Community Empowerment	Community Economic Development
▪ Governance ▪ Community control ▪ Organizational structures ▪ Representation ▪ Resources ▪ Policy frameworks ▪ Programs and services ▪ Links with other organizations	▪ Jobs and job development ▪ Businesses ▪ Investments ▪ Community economic development strategies ▪ Models ▪ Partnerships ▪ Support mechanisms
Community Wellness	**Community Learning**
▪ Physical, mental, social and spiritual health ▪ Relationship with the land ▪ Self-identity through traditional culture ▪ Healing ▪ Prevention ▪ Strong families ▪ Supportive relationships ▪ Links between personal and family needs and health care services	▪ Community as classroom ▪ Land as a classroom ▪ Acquiring wisdom from Elders ▪ Schooling ▪ Individual and group learning ▪ Literacy and adult basic education ▪ Skill development and training

Source: Bell 1999a

It should be noted that new understandings of community development have emerged that are unique to the Lennox Island First Nation beyond the Four C's outlined.

D. Researcher Bias

I worked with First Nations in Canada, on Vancouver Island and the Mainland coast, for many years as a Resource Planner. There are a limited number of treaties in British Columbia and it was my role to understand and

advocate, alongside the leadership, the member First Nation's issues to the provincial and the federal governments. Meetings with government representatives repeatedly demonstrated that government was only willing to work within their established policies. There seemed to be little interest in changing policy unless a court decision, such as Delgamuk or the Marshall decision, forced governments to resolve Aboriginal issues.

Through my experience I have been exposed to numerous critical views of government policy, including the effects of residential schools on Aboriginal culture and language. Although my experience working within Aboriginal communities provides useful background in understanding issues that First Nations face, I was also cognizant of these biases during this study. I kept a field journal to record any preconceived notions that were made, in an attempt to eliminate personal bias from this research study.

E. Study Boundaries

This is a tourism study with a particular focus on ecotourism as a form of community development. This research is not an ethnographic study, but rather, ethnographic techniques were used to examine how the Lennox Island Aboriginal ecotourism initiative has impacted community development. The community members of the Lennox Island First Nation are the experts and this research study is a joint effort done with them.

The following factors are considered limitations in this research:

1. **Stages of Development**: The year in which research is conducted may be a limitation in that the Lennox Island ecotourism project is in the early

stages (the slow growth stage) of Butler's (1980) Tourist Area Life Cycle model.

2. **Language**: My inability to speak the Mi'kmaq language may have been a limitation when certain elders were approached to participate in the study, as English was their second language.

F. Definitions

Community is defined in many different ways, encompassing both a biologic and human perspective. For the purposes of this research, *community* is loosely defined as a group or category of people who have something in common, which it implies that community members are similar to each other and different from non-members (Cohen, 1985).

The definition of *development* is difficult to establish. Telfer (2002b) suggests that there is not a precise definition of *Development* but rather, what *Development* should imply in particular contexts. Telfer (2002) states that, "Development involves structural transformation that implies political, cultural, social and economic changes" (2002, 37).

Sustainable development is also difficult to define but Eade (2000) suggests that to move towards *sustainable development* means the process "promotes equity and enhances the ability to gain a decent living, both now and into the future. Sustainability is more than a matter of financial self-reliance: it depends on people's social and economic capacity to withstand and surmount pressure on their lives, and ways of life" (5)

Within the tourism industry there are many different forms of tourism. For instance, *Cultural tourism* is defined by the Australian government as "travel for essentially cultural motivations...for example, to attend festivals or to visit sites or monuments...or immerse oneself in the culture of a region" (Lennon, 2001). *Aboriginal tourism* is another branch of tourism that is defined by MacHattie and Wolf-Keddie as "a cultural product involving the interpretation of First Nations traditions, their earth-based way of life, and their living heritage through stories, songs, dances, handicrafts by members of the First Nation" (2000, 4). *Ecotourism* combines cultural tourism with nature tourism, and includes an educational component and is defined as "a means of protecting natural areas through the generation of revenues, environmental education and the involvement of local people" (Ross & Wall, 1999, 124). For the purpose of this research study the form of tourism development that is under consideration is ecotourism. The *Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism Development* means, "Lennox Island Mi'kmaq managed, run and led tourism with an emphasis on authentic, educational Mi'kmaq experience combined with experience and education about the island and bay natural environment" (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000, 4).

The term *Aboriginal* is used throughout this research for consistency purposes but the literature may use *First Nations, Aboriginal, Indian, Native* or *Indigenous*. These terms are used interchangeably. *Aboriginal* in this research is defined as "descendants of original inhabitants; distinct in language, culture, or religion from the dominant population; who see themselves as custodians and

caretakers, not owners, of their habitats; who define themselves partly in terms of their habitat; and who have a subsistence economy involving direct dependence on their habitat; and who manage resources collectively, often by consensus of elders" (King and Stewart, 1996, 298). The Lennox Island First Nation is the governing body of the Aboriginal community on Lennox Island, which is designated as a Federal Indian Reserve.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LENNOX ISLAND FIRST NATION

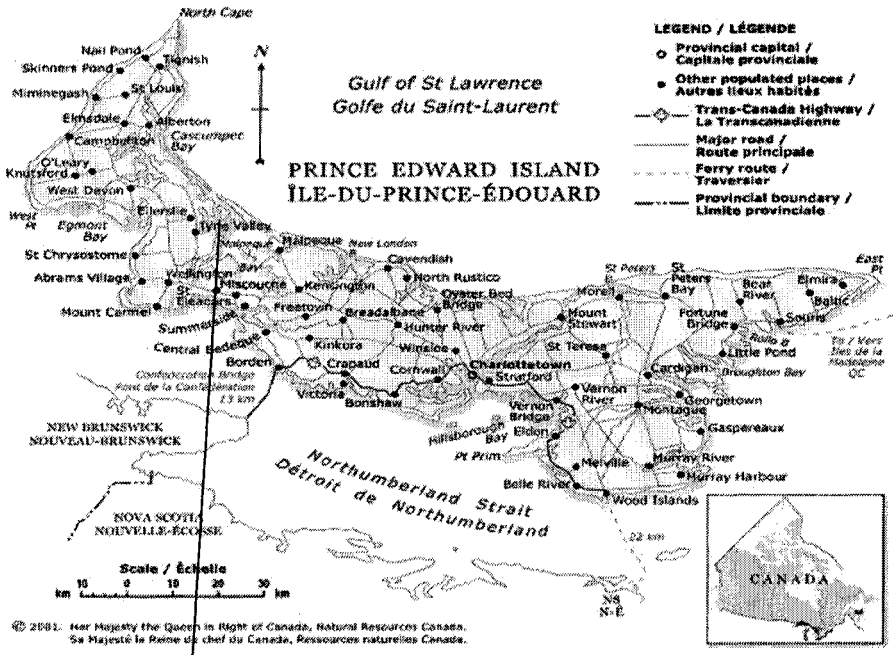
A. Pre-Contact

Lennox Island is 520 hectares and is the largest island situated in Malpeque Bay, Prince Edward Island, Canada (Figure 1). The continuous sand-dune barrier islands located just north of the Bay protect Lennox Island from the influence of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This unique habitat creates a rich diversity of flora and fauna, with special importance being recognized for bird nesting sites and the most important oyster grounds in the Maritimes (MacHattie & Wolf-Keddie, 2000).

The coastal Islands and calm salt water of Malpeque Bay are an integral part of the history, tradition and culture of the Mi'kmaq. There is significant archeological evidence that indicates the presence of Mi'kmaq in and around Malpeque Bay dating back 10,000 years (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004). There is a rich legacy of Mi'kmaq culture preserved through oral tradition which has evolved over generations. The knowledge of seasonal migration patterns of wild game allowed the Mi'kmaq to survive during the harsh winter climate of the Maritimes (Lennox Island Band Council, 1988). This knowledge allowed individuals in the community to arrive at the coast in time for hunting seals, know when the salmon were running, and when the bird colonies arrived in order to collect eggs. Traditional knowledge not only helped families and communities find food; it allowed for the harvest of medicinal plants and production of natural remedies (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004). The

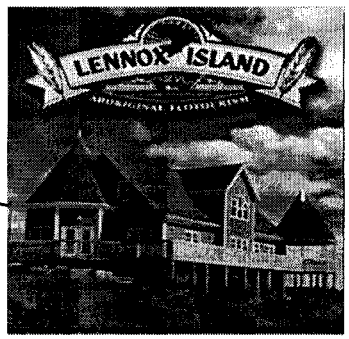
FIGURE 1: Area Being Considered

Prince Edward Island



Source: Natural Resources Canada

Lennox Island



Lennox Island Ecotourism

Source: lennoxisland.com

use of these medicines became inseparable from the spiritual practices of the Mi'kmaq and formed an important cornerstone of the culture (Lennox Island Band Council, 1988).

Although food and medicinal plants were plentiful, travel was required to obtain these necessities. They often traded home locations with relatives and friends to acquire all the necessary supplies to live throughout the year (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004). The Mi'kmaq traveled inland in the cold winter months for shelter and to hunt large animals. In the summer, Mi'kmaq camped along the shores, fishing and hunting smaller animals.

Governance of the Mi'kmaq people followed a rich tradition. During the summer months, many of the Mi'kmaq communities would come together, celebrate the past year and the respective Chiefs would begin their annual meetings (Lennox Island Band Council, 1988). The structure of Mi'kmaq government saw each community have a hereditary Chief who looked after the wellbeing of his members. There were also seven district chiefs that represented the various regions of Mi'kmaq territory. A Grand Chief was selected and was in charge of issues affecting the entire Mi'kmaq nation, including settling disputes with other nations and negotiating alliances (Lennox Island Band Council, 1988).

B. Contact

Initial contact with Europeans changed many aspects of Aboriginal life. By the early seventeenth century, the French controlled most of the trading and fishing industries throughout Acadia and were the first to permanently settle in Mi'kmaq territory (Paul, 2000). With them, the French brought a different form of

religion to the Aboriginal world and many Mi'kmaq adopted Christianity, intrigued by the similarities of the symbolism and ritualism used in their own spirituality. The Grand Chief Membertou was baptized at Port Royal in 1610 (Lennox Island Band Council, 1988). Based on the literature, my field notes and interview transcriptions, Catholicism greatly influenced the Lennox Island First Nation and still does today. With the introduction to Christianity and exposure to greater numbers of Europeans, the Mi'kmaq culture, language and traditions were beginning to feel the effects of this increased pressure, which resulted in the eventual erosion of many aspects of Mi'kmaq culture.

As missionaries were being sent from Europe to convert the 'savages' (Paul, 2000), the English and French continued to battle over colonization of the new world and gain control of the rich natural resources of the area. Peace arrived in 1713 when France and Great Britain signed the treaty of Utrecht. Soon after, the English proposed to the Mi'kmaq Chiefs that, "they permit British settlement in their villages for the purpose of creating one people" (Paul, 2000, 73). The offer was rejected outright by the Mi'kmaq Chiefs and this created tension until treaties were signed in 1725.

In 1764 British surveyors divided Prince Edward Island into 67 lots, which were awarded to British landlords. The 1320 acres of Lennox Island were given to Sir James Montgomery (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004). By the 1780s, the pressure of British settlement on Prince Edward Island was beginning to have an impact on the traditional Mi'kmaq way of life. The routes that Island Mi'kmaq followed for millennia were being restricted by new farmland and by the

farmers themselves. Many animals and plants used by the Mi'kmaq were fast disappearing, as the forests were being cut and burned for the newcomers' farming activity. Lennox Island continued to be a favourite campsite and meeting place for the Mi'kmaq and was a meeting place where disputes were settled between Mi'kmaq and European settlers (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004). While tensions were rising between the Mi'kmaq and the British in the new world, a group in England was working for the protection of Aboriginal people in the colonies.

The Aborigines Protection Society based in London, devoted to assisting Aboriginal Peoples, purchased Lennox Island in 1870 for £400 (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004), so that it could be set-aside for the Mi'kmaq of the area. Lennox Island was designated a special reserve after Prince Edward Island joined Confederation but it did not receive official reserve status until 1970. At this time, the federal government passed an order-in-council giving Lennox Island formal Indian Act reserve status (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004).

Just prior to the purchase of Lennox Island, the British Parliament created Canada by enacting the British North American Act in 1867, which included four provinces and established two levels of government. Prince Edward Island joined confederation in 1873 and in 1876 the Indian Act was conceived to legally manage Canada's constitutional obligations towards Aboriginal people. With the Indian Act in place, the federal government was able to formulate and implement policy that effectively controlled the lives of Aboriginal people across Canada

(Paul, 2000; Elias, 1991). Through this Act the government assumed responsibility over economic development, education, health care, and governance (Long & Dickason, 1996). Paul (2000) describes the most immediate benefit of the establishment of early Canada for Mi'kmaq people as, "the assistance from Ottawa would be high enough to end starvation. The biggest negative was that communication...was very difficult for a largely uneducated population" (202).

The federal government through the Indian Act and other invasive policies such as the White Paper of 1969 continued to try and assimilate First Nations across the country into Canadian society. For example, a law was passed in 1884 and revised in 1921 to ban all cultural ceremonies and practices of Aboriginal people. Potlatches were forbidden, police confiscated cultural paraphernalia, and Elders were jailed for their participation in cultural activities (Henderson, 2004). "The section of the Indian Act outlawing ceremonies was repealed in 1951, and almost as soon as the prohibition was lifted, the Potlatch, Sundance, and Midewewin flourished once again in the open" (Elias, 1991, 148).

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential schools were established by the federal government, run by churches, and meant to assimilate Aboriginal children into mainstream society (Long & Dickason, 1996). Schools managed by churches prohibited the speaking of Aboriginal languages and forced children to learn and speak English. If the rules were not followed, harsh punishment was issued as noted by individuals who attended (Henderson, 2004). Churches also condemned Aboriginal spiritual practices and strongly encouraged

followers to understand the teachings of the bible (Paul, 2002; Warry, 2000; Long & Dickason, 1996). The Indian Act, the approach by early missionaries, and church schools were all attempts at trying to convert Aboriginal people to a very different belief system, which has had profound effects on Aboriginal cultures across Canada. Lennox Island residents did not escape government policy or the effects of Church run institutions, which has led to an erosion of their culture and traditional knowledge.

From the perspective of many First Nations the formulation of the Indian Act by the government of Canada, limited the ability of Aboriginal communities to direct community development in a manner appropriate to their needs, including strengthening their culture and traditional practices (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). Where Aboriginal communities have been involved in community development, Elias (1991) suggests that "many communities were unwilling to adopt any Canadian innovations if they threatened even the least erosion of tradition" (34). The Lennox Island First Nation has found ways to include its culture within community development initiatives and has had limited economic success in providing opportunities for community members.

C. Lennox Island First Nation Today

In 2004 the Lennox Island First Nation was a community of approximately 400 inhabitants (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004). In the 2001 census compiled by Statistics Canada, the population increase from 1996 to 2001 was 17.6% compared to Canada's average population change of 4.0%. Lennox Island's population increase was four times higher than the national average from

1996 to 2001. With a growing young population, interesting challenges arise for the Lennox Island First Nation when those youth begin to look for employment opportunities on the reserve.

Before the causeway connected Lennox Island to Prince Edward Island in 1974, the economic opportunities were scarce. One community member describes the employment situation and states, "40 years ago there may have been two or three people from here who were employed. People made money through making baskets...[employment] could almost be zero percent at some points" (Prilla, August 24, 2004). The causeway, along with other factors, has since opened up business opportunities and commercial ventures including a peat moss factory, blueberry and oyster harvesting, lobster fishing, small-scale forestry operations (Lennox Island Band Council, 1988) and more recently tourism.

Statistics Canada indicates that 135 community members, who were fifteen years and over, were employed from 2000 to 2001. For this same time period there was an unemployment rate of 29.2% compared to 7.4% across Canada. These figures have changed in a positive direction for the community since 2001 and in 2004 the fishery accounted for approximately seventy five seasonal jobs (McGuire, 2004) which is attributed to participation in the lucrative lobster fishery. Lennox Island First Nation administration and service jobs account for approximately 50 full-time jobs. Additionally, according to McGuire, the tourism industry saw between 40-45 jobs created for the 2004 tourist season (2004). Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism accounts for the majority of the

seasonal tourism industry jobs, but it is noted by McGuire (2004) that a small number are not directly attributed to the ecotourism project and already established businesses such as the craft and pottery shops.

The social statistics available from the 2001 census provide a glimpse into life on Lennox Island. Of the sixty five individuals who indicated their marital status, twenty five were married, fifteen lived in common-law relationships and twenty were lone-parent families. There were 260 community members in 2001 who indicated which religion they practiced, 215 individuals on Lennox Island said they where Catholic, fifteen Protestant and fifteen said they had other religions. Thirty three percent of the population aged 20-34 indicated that they had less than high school education. The same percentage completed high school and twenty five percent indicated that they had a trade certificate or diploma. No one from this age category indicated that they had a university certificate (Statistics Canada, 2001).

D. Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism

In 1996 Forestry Canada funded a Lennox Island project that was to investigate forest-based economic development opportunities. The results of the project saw a forest management plan and an Eco-lodge feasibility study. From this work, consideration was given to ecotourism development. In 1998-99 a community planner held consultation to determine the interest of ecotourism on Lennox Island. As part of a community-based initiative, sixty-two door-to-door surveys were completed and informal interviews provided information on community interests regarding Aboriginal ecotourism (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie,

2000). The overall response from the community was positive and a number of ideas, such as;

- creation of demonstration area to illustrate traditional Mi'kmaq culture,
- hosting a Pow Wow,
- organizing bird-watching and canoe/boat tours.

From these consultations the Lennox Island Aboriginal ecotourism project was set in motion to develop and support tourism on Lennox Island.

The leadership of the Lennox Island First Nation chose to pursue ecotourism as a viable form of community development and, in 1999, a Ten Year Ecotourism Strategy was created. The strategy was divided into five separate phases and guiding principles were formulated to ensure the ecotourism initiative would reflect community values. Some examples of the guiding principles include to:

- Protect and strengthen ecological and cultural integrity,
- Strengthen community and personal self-worth and pride in heritage,
- Contribute to economic development and maximize the spread employment and,
- Transfer management, planning, business development skills to members via capacity building initiatives

(MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000)

These principles reflect the values important to the Lennox Island community members and the aim is to include these into each aspect of the ecotourism development.

The developmental phase included the construction of the Ecotourism complex and the 'Path of our Forefathers' trail. Interpretive signage on the Path and in the Cultural center along with an educational video shown in the

Ecotourism complex, enables the Lennox Island initiative to provide eco-tourists with three separate venues to learn about Mi'kmaq culture and have exposure to the natural surroundings. The majority of funding for the project has come from the federal and provincial governments. There is a strong sense of pride felt by the community towards the project because the initiative utilizes local knowledge, is grounded in community aspirations, and the culture is being overtly expressed and controlled by the community.

Since 2000, ecotourism on Lennox Island has evolved with a number of tourists from around the world visiting the community to learn about Mi'kmaq culture and enjoy the unique natural setting (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004). Today there are several activities and facilities that attract visitors to the Island including a 10km nature/interpretive trail, visitor's center, traditional foods restaurant, cultural center, various educational opportunities such as basket making, learning about traditional medicines, and also private businesses such as a kayaking company, a boat charter business and a craft store. In discussing future capacity of the ecotourism project with an employee, he states,

> Lennox Island Aboriginal ecotourism is entering its fifth year of development and its fourth year of operations. Following our Ten Year Strategic planning process, which focuses on incremental development with a balance between community benefits and program sustainability, we have developed sufficient infrastructure to increase tourism demand to Lennox Island. (Fred, August 24, 2004)

With the capacity to expand operations on Lennox Island, the future presents a number of possibilities for community members to participate in developing ecotourism in line with their values and culture.

E. Discussion

One of the primary reasons ecotourism was chosen by the Lennox Island First Nation was the economic impacts that were projected. As important to these benefits was the consideration given to the culture and surrounding environment that the guiding principles illustrate are key elements that needed to be included in the initiative (Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism, 2004; McGuire, 2004; MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000). With the values of the community being reflected in the guiding principles of the ecotourism plan, even five years after inception, there is still an enthusiasm generated by community members when the project is discussed. This enthusiasm suggests that there is something unique about the way in which ecotourism is being approached and developed on Lennox Island. The project is examined more closely to understand what impacts ecotourism is having on community development.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Introduction

This review of the literature develops an understanding of how the concepts of sustainable tourism development, ecotourism, Aboriginal tourism and community development are linked to the central focus of this research. The literature suggests that Aboriginal communities are becoming more interested in sustainable tourism and ecotourism as a contributor to community development. The literature on Aboriginal tourism illustrates that many First Nations have chosen to become involved in the tourism industry (Hinch & Bultler, 1996) and are actively pursuing this form of development to regain some control over community development activities (Notzke, 1999; Zeppel, 1998a). In the past, Aboriginal community development in Canada and around the world has seen First Nations crippled by colonialist attitudes (Paul, 2000; Sofield, 1993). It has been shown that imposing development on Aboriginal peoples that is not sensitive to cultural needs and aspirations, is seldom successful (Cornell & Kalt, 1998) and thus, viable alternatives have been sought. The final section of this review considers a comprehensive approach to community development.

B. Sustainable Tourism Development

Sustainable tourism development has been referred to as an adaptive paradigm within which several different development goals can be legitimized according to the circumstances (Hunter, 1997). The problem with sustainable

tourism development, according to Sharpley (2002), is that the term is ambiguous and defies precise definition. Sustainable tourism as described in the literature is finding a balance between economy, environment, societal and cultural values (Knowles et al., 2001; Pearce, 1995; Muller, 1994; Lane, 1994; Bramwell & Lane, 1993). Colton (2000 a) suggests that the philosophy behind this form of development has shifted from the neoclassic economic approach to one that is more holistic and considers community needs, the natural environment and the economy.

Since the 1990s sustainable tourism development has become a 'catchall phrase' for the tourism industry (Sharpley, 2002; Knowles et al., 2001). Muller (1994) suggests that understanding sustainable tourism development means that a balance must be struck between economic viability, the well-being of locals, the amount of unspoiled nature, the protection of natural resources, the health of the local culture and the satisfaction of guests. Similarly Knowles (et al., 2001) describes the term as embracing a number of key principles, including; ethics that respect the culture and the environment of the host area, the economy, the traditional way of life, the indigenous people and the leadership of the communities. Sustainable tourism is a "positive approach intended to reduce tensions and friction created by the complex interactions between the tourism industry, visitors, the environment and the communities which are host" (Bramwell & Lane, 1993, 2). The benefit of this approach is that sustainable tourism works toward the long-term viability of not only the human, but the natural resources of the area as well (Bramwell & Lane, 1993).

There are many critics of the concept of sustainable tourism development. Some important criticisms include:

- The term is not being employed as an analytical tool but used for political purposes (Wall, 1997),
- What it actually means and how it is measured (McMinn, 1997; Wearing, 1997),
- Theory versus the practice of sustainable tourism (Butcher, 1997),
- Whether it is just an opportunistic marketing ploy by the tourism industry. (Wheeller, 1995, 1993)

Bramwell and Lane (1993) consider the issue of sustainable tourism development as being fundamentally misguided because there is a sense that the industry is sustainable. It provides an appeasement of the tourist's conscience, while industry continues to open up further markets that add to its adverse impacts (Bramwell & Lane, 1993). Despite these criticisms, the search for an acceptable definition of the term and its proper implementation continues.

Colton (2000a) suggests that emerging from this debate is the evolution of dialogue that "must occur as it expands both philosophically and pragmatically our understanding of how tourism strategies must grow" (32). Colton's (2000b) research with Aboriginal peoples indicates that, for sustainable tourism development to occur, stakeholders who represent a diverse and often complex range of interests need to be part of the planning of tourism development. Inclusive community involvement, collaborating with other industries, and focus on meeting visitors expectations, are increasingly recognized as effective means of mitigating challenges inherent in sustainable tourism development (Colton, 2000b; Bramwell & Lane, 2000; Hunter, 1997).

I. The Concept of Aboriginal Sustainability

Aboriginal communities have much to offer in the discussion of sustainability. A prevalent theme is the relationship between Aboriginal people and the land/environment that are expressed in different ways by various authors (Simpson & Driben, 2000; Paul, 2000; Wall, 1999; King & Stewart, 1996; Mansperger, 1995; Elias 1991; MacGregor, 1993). It is frequently argued that an understanding of this connection to the land is critical in understanding sustainability and sustainable tourism development. Choudhury (1997), MacGregor (1993) and Booth and Jacobs (1990) illustrate this connection with the land and how it has an important bearing on future generations and the concept of sustainability.

Choudhury (1997) cites an Aboriginal declaration presented in 1981, which reads:

> We the Original Peoples of this land know the Creator put us here. The Creator gave us laws that govern all our relationships to live in harmony with nature and mankind. The laws of the Creator defined our rights and responsibilities. The Creator gave us our spiritual beliefs, our languages, our culture, and our place on Mother Earth which provided us with all our needs. We have maintained our freedom, our languages, and our traditions from time immemorial. We continue to exercise the rights and fulfill the responsibilities and obligations given to us by the Creator for the land upon which we were placed. (1257-1258)

The Aboriginal perspective of creation and care for Mother Earth cited by Choudhury (1997) and similarly discussed by other authors (e.g., Poonwassie & Charter 2001; Long & Dickason, 1996; Booth & Jacobs, 1990) differ substantially

from Judeo-Christian dogma. Bell (1999b) reveals the Judeo-Christian cosmology in which "to quote the Creator in Genesis, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish and the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth'...The result of this legacy has been to disassociate the human community from the earth community, and to develop within us humans an arrogance of ownership" (9). These two quotes are brought up not to debate religious ideology but rather to suggest that there are other perspectives when it comes for caring for the earth.

Research conducted by Simpson and Driben (2000) illustrate how one Aboriginal community, the Anishinaabe, have a

> fundamentally different view of the relationship between humans and their surroundings than do their European-Canadian counterparts. This is one that is based on a philosophy that simultaneously promotes the integrity of the environment and the well-being of those who reside there. (14)

Much of this difference in view of the land/environment is discussed in the literature from a historic perspective and few studies have looked at the contemporary concept of sustainable Aboriginal community development. The tourism literature provides a glimpse into what Simpson and Driben (2000) have described as, fundamentally different views of perceiving the world/environment.

Research conducted by Riemer (2004) in the tourism industry describes how Aboriginal spear fishing and non-Aboriginal sport fishing have created tension in a small northern Wisconsin town. There are two fundamentally different perceptions of the world/environment that are uncovered in this research. Interviews conducted with the non-Aboriginal fishing guides reveal one

perception of viewing the natural resources of the area. One guide states, "What I catch now in a year, I caught in a week years ago. A lot of years I took 500-600 up to 700 walleye on Butternut Lake alone" (Riemer, 2004, 63). Many guides blame the spear fishing as a problem that needs to be resolved. In discussions with the Aboriginal spear fishermen many key points, related to sustainability, are raised. The key points are summarized as follows:

- Spear fishing is not a sport and fish are not mounted on the wall,
- The Creator provides all living things and thus must be treated with respect. When living things are taken from nature, respect for their spirit must be shown,
- Sharing the catch with the community is expected,
- Catching and sharing of traditional foods reaffirm Aboriginal identity and cultural heritage. (Riemer, 2004)

This world-view presented by the Aboriginal spear fishermen is much different from the economic focus of the non-Aboriginal sports fishing guides.

Aboriginal communities have much to offer with regards to the discussions on sustainability. Many Aboriginal people have an intimate connection to the land as illustrated by MacGregor (1993):

> Most contemporary natives maintain this intense relationship with their natural environment. It has been my experience that even my native friends and colleagues living in the city have a close connection with the land base of their band...white Americans are rarely buried in places they were born and most of them migrate freely during their lifetimes living in as many as a dozen places and having roots in and accepting responsibility for none of these locations...This isolation from the land is therefore synonymous with an inability to both understand and take responsibility for what we are doing to the environment. At best, we can only have a

> romantic or an aesthetic relationship which may not be enough to change our consumptive or environmentally destructive habits. In other words, we may have a warm feeling about the environment, but do we really know about sustainability for future generations other than what we read in contemporary, intellectual literature...Land, therefore, has a sacred quality that I don't understand. (1993, 267)

If sacredness and respect are given to a place when development is being considered, a much different form of development could transpire. While conducting research on Lennox Island, consideration was given to the notion of 'sacred quality' as discussed by MacGregor (1993), 'respect' described by Riemer (2004) and difference in worldview discussed by Simpson and Driben (2000).

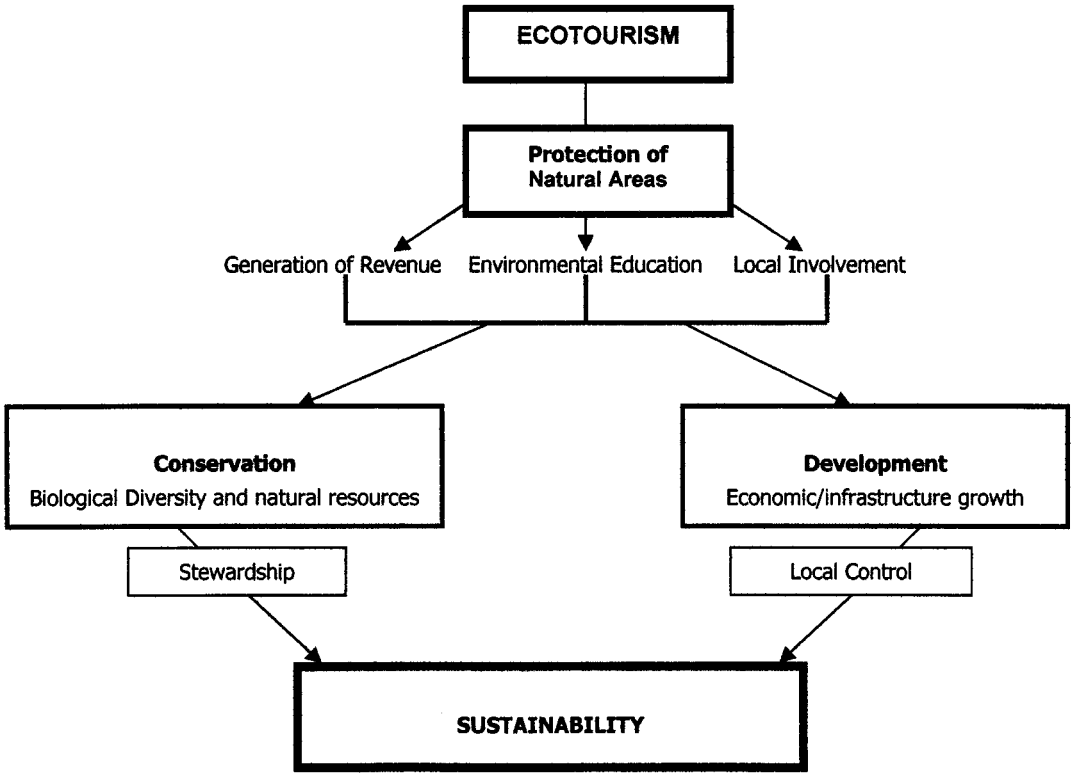
C. Ecotourism

Sustainable tourism is the overarching concept under which a number of alternative forms of tourism development emerge (Fennel, 2002; Knowles et al., 2001). Nature tourism, cultural tourism and ecotourism are popular segments of the sustainable tourism industry and the growth in these forms of tourism have occurred in the peripheral and isolated, rural regions throughout the world (Sharpley, 2001; Timothy & White, 1999; Honey, 1999). The competitive advantage (Colton, 2000a; Hinch & Butler, 1996) of rural areas for their natural beauty and their potential for authentic cultural experiences (Lane, 2001; Notzke, 1999; Hughes, 1995) has lured many tourists to remote communities. It is suggested that this has allowed ecotourism to grow as the fastest segment of the tourism economy throughout the world (Campbell, 1999; Wight, 1993).

The term ecotourism has many definitions and practical applications that are illustrated in the literature (Fennell, 2002; Reid, 1999; Ceballos-Lacurain, 1991). Fennell has found 85 definitions of ecotourism throughout the academic literature and isolated 20 keywords. The words most frequently used in the definitions he examined include: natural areas, conservation, reference to culture, benefits to locals, education and sustainability (2002, 15).

Ross and Wall (1999) illustrate their definition in a diagram reproduced in Figure 2. Ross and Wall (1999) define ecotourism as "a means of protecting

Figure 2: Definition - The Components That Make Up Ecotourism



Source: Ross & Wall (1999)

natural areas through the generation of revenues, environmental education and the involvement of local people (in both decisions regarding appropriate developments and associated benefits). In such ways, both conservation and development will be promoted in sustainable forms" (Ross & Wall, 1999, 124). Although this definition includes many of the key words found by Fennell (2002), there is still debate on the nature of ecotourism.

Critics of ecotourism are concerned with how this form of tourism has evolved. For example, Mader (2003) and Fennell (2002) suggest that with so many operators offering a variety of products with little or no standards and/or regulations, it allows almost anything related to the environment or nature to be marketed as ecotourism. King and Stewart (1996) have concerns related to the commodification of elements of a community's culture and their habitats because, with commodification comes, "serious negative impacts unless effective controls can be imposed upon the industry" (302).

The literature suggests that ecotourism will not likely be the instant panacea for community development as is often anticipated, until both the positive and negative issues are more comprehensively addressed (Wearing & Davidson, 1997; Altman, 1989). Despite these cautions communities around the world are embracing ecotourism as a solution to many economic, social, environmental, cultural and political problems. These include developments in the Galapagos Islands (Honey, 1999), the wet tropics of Queensland (Sofield, 2002), the rainforest ecotourism projects in South and Central America (Zeppel, 1998a), and game parks in Africa (Eagles, 1997). The literature suggests that

ecotourism should not be considered as an 'instant fix' that will solve a community's economic problems but can be used to assist in diversifying its economy (Simpson, 2001; Ross & Wall, 1999; King & Stewart, 1996). Ross and Wall (1999) state:

> Communities should not be encouraged to become solely dependent upon ecotourism: rather, ecotourism ideally should complement other activities and help to diversify an economy. Tourism of any type should not be viewed in isolation and its development should be considered as part of a broader plan for the use of resources. (129)

There are many possible benefits of ecotourism described in the literature. Table 2 outlines what Fennel describes as a "speculative list of benefits that may be derived from participation in ecotourism" (2002, 22). For example, one concept under the ecological benefits of ecotourism describes the concept of 'life support', which refers to those systems that need to be "preserved as the foundational support of all life – human and non-human" (22). These benefits outlined by Fennel (2002) will be considered while researching Lennox Island's ecotourism development.

Table 2: Potential Ecotourism Benefits (from the perspective of the guest)

Psychological	Sociological	Educational	Ecological
Self-concept	Compassion	Outdoor education	Enjoy nature
Fitness	Share similar values	Nature awareness	Life support
Skills	Respect for others	Environmental education	Aesthetic
Self-discovery	Problem solving	Value clarification	Scientific
Actualization	Behaviour feedback	Ethics	Historical
Well-being	Friendship	Scientific	Ecosystem
Personal testing			Religious/philosophical

(Source: Fennel, 2002, 23)

Ecotourism also provides benefits to the host community. Colton's (2000a) research describes the potential positive outcomes to an Aboriginal community including local employment, pride in showing aspects of one's culture, economic diversification, a greater flow of money into the community, infrastructure improvements and cross-cultural understanding. MacGregor (1993) describes how ecotourism can benefit a community when traditional knowledge is used to educate guests about the practice of past activities, and how this transfer of knowledge is important for the culture.

There are also negative impacts which occur with ecotourism development and communities have had to reluctantly accept and minimize these impacts through careful planning. Potential negative impacts revealed in the literature include:

- Increased amounts of pollution and contamination,
- Over development,
- Habitat destruction,
- Wildlife disturbance,
- Trespass onto sacred sites, and
- Change in lifestyle from working on the land to serving tourists.

(Sofield, 2002; King & Stewart, 1996; Boo, 1990)

Sofield (2002) discusses how an Aboriginal community in Australia has experienced negative impacts of ecotourism development, particularly due to the lack of skills of individuals operating the project. Other authors have suggested how to mitigate or minimize these unwanted effects including culturally appropriate training (Sofield, 2002; Harris & Wearing, 1999), regulatory control, cooperative management and enforcement (Fennell, 2002).

It has been noted in the literature that some forms of tourism are not considered ecotourism based on the consumptive nature of the activity (Fennell, 2002; Colton 2000a; Hinch, 1998). Fennell (2002) argues that catch-and-release fishing, as an example, is consumptive and should not be labeled ecotourism. Other activities such as hunting, fishing and trapping which many Aboriginal communities actively participate in, if included in a tourism product, are not consistent with the principles of ecotourism.

D. Aboriginal Tourism

It is estimated that Aboriginal tourism business in Canada generated a total of $4.9 billion in economic activity in 2001 (INAC, 2003). *Aboriginal tourism* has been defined as, any tourism activity in which Aboriginal people are directly involved either through ownership / operation or by having their culture serve as the essence of the attraction (Hinch & Butler, 1996; Parker, 1993). Aboriginal tourism has grown significantly around the globe (Zeppel, 1998b; Hinch & Butler, 1996) and plays an important role in community development.

Parker (1993) describes the benefits Aboriginal communities in Canada have experienced from the tourism industry. These include:

- both women and men can be successful owners and operators;
- employment opportunities exist for a low and high-skilled work force;
- employment opportunities exist for all ages;
- tourism can be developed on a large or small scale;
- tourism can be an industry that respects the environment;
- tourism provides a positive working environment and lifestyle;
- tourism provides an opportunity to reflect pride in our culture;

- through tourism development, cultural education is possible.

(Parker, 1993, 401)

Hiwasaki (2000) also acknowledges the above benefits but adds that Aboriginal tourism can bring "international attention to the political claims of oppressed minorities" (396). Other authors (Medina, 2003; Sofield, 2002; Snow, 2000) have illustrated the value tourism has had in preserving, revitalizing or even re-learning traditional cultures. Hinch and Butler (1996) describe the economic and cultural benefits as being in a "symbiotic relationship (that) exists to the extent that cultural survival will contribute to economic success and economic success will contribute to cultural survival" (5). These positive benefits have been key reasons why Aboriginal communities around the world have adopted tourism as a development strategy.

The literature also provides a number of concerns communities are experiencing or need to be aware of when considering tourism development. One such concern relates to the difference in value systems. "The essence of the economic argument is that income generated through tourism represents a fair exchange of value for value between indigenous and non-indigenous people" (Hinch & Butler, 1996, 5). A number of authors (Hashimoto, 2002; Morito, 2002; Robinson, 1999; Harris & Wearing, 1999; Sofield, 1993) suggest this economic exchange can create conflict between cultures because of the dissimilar value and belief systems attached to the tourists and host communities.

Honey (1999) indicates that nearly 80 percent of all international tourists come from twenty developed countries around the world. Based on the cultural background of the majority of tourists, there is not only the influence of the

western value system being brought into Aboriginal communities (Wall, 1999), but the types of developments that occur have been influenced by western concepts (Sofield, 1993). The exchange of money for culture can create challenges for Aboriginal communities as tourism development expands.

Issues important to this research that arise in the literature include commoditization of culture, control over the tourism development, and sustainable forms of Aboriginal tourism.

I. Commoditization of Culture

Commoditization of culture is considered to be the exchange of money for cultural products (Medina, 2003). More specifically *commoditization* is defined as:

> A process by which things (and activities) come to be evaluated primarily in terms of their exchange value in a context of trade, thereby becoming goods (and services); developed exchange systems in which the exchange value of things (and activities) is stated in terms of prices. (Cohen, 1988, 380)

Within the literature, Medina (2003) describes two schools of thought when referring to commoditization of culture. One argument suggests that once a culture becomes commoditized the, "consumption renders the resulting practices inauthentic" (Medina, 2003, 353 as argued in MacCannell 1976 & Greenwood 1977), meaning the cultural activity is no longer practiced in its original form and is no longer real once money is exchanged to view the activity (King & Stewart, 1996). The second school of thought is where commoditization of culture generates new cultural practices, which are real, and just as meaningful to those who participate in it (Cohen, 1988). Medina (2003) brings a new understanding

into the commoditization literature, in which the Mayan people from Belize have lost most of their culture and are finding new avenues to learn their ancestor's cultural practices for presentation to tourists. Within these three understandings of commoditization of culture, the issue of control over the cultural practice emerges as a central concern.

The discussion regarding commoditization comes from two different perspectives, the tourists and the host community. Tourists are looking for an authentic cultural experience (Medina 2003 as argued in MacCannell 1976; Lane, 2001; King & Stewart, 1996) but from the Aboriginal community's perspective, consideration regarding which aspects of the culture should be shared with outsiders is discussed (Cohen, 1988). For the purposes of this research the discussion on which part(s) of the culture, if any, should be commoditized for public consumption is of interest. The literature provides a number of case studies.

Burlo (1996) offers an example of commoditization where the Sa in Vanuatu generate revenue by offering visitors a chance to view an authentic cultural activity. Performed by the men in the community, Gol (land diving) is related to the individual hierarchy in yam production (Burlo, 1996). In an attempt to maintain control and protect the integrity of Gol, the Sa community has imposed strict limitations on what tourists view and what recording technologies can be brought to the event (Burlo, 1996). The ritual has not been modified for the tourist's gaze (Urry, 1990) but restrictions are in place to ensure the

community maintains control. Commoditization in this case has enabled the Sa to benefit economically from tourism while maintaining their traditional activity.

Snow and Wheeler (2000) examine two Panamanian Aboriginal communities and describe how commoditization of culture has affected each. The Kuna do not have control over their own land base but have strong cultural ties and control over many aspects of tourism and the research has found an erosion of norms and customs. The second community, the Embera, does not have control over the tourism development, they have weak cultural ties, and no real policies in place to control tourist activity. In this case a revival of culture has been strong and commoditization of culture has provided a sense of pride (Snow & Wheeler, 2000). In the context of Aboriginal tourism development, commoditization of culture can have significant positive or negative impacts depending on the particular circumstances facing the community. The issue of control over the tourism development is a theme that continuously emerges.

II. Control

Hinch (1995) suggests that although commoditization of culture is a complex issue, the negative impacts that are associated with this type of exchange could be minimized if informed Aboriginal communities are in control of the development process. Further to this, Zeppel (1998a) explains that in securing a land base, Aboriginal people would be in control of both tourist access and the level of visitation to specific sites. Lack of control within developing countries has profound effects on the economic, social and political structure of

Aboriginal communities, including the dislocation of individuals from their traditional lands and activities (Brown, 1999; Mansperger, 1995).

With respect to control, Juarez (2002) illustrates a case in Mexico where the Mayas of the Tulum region have only partial control over development. This has resulted in individuals shifting from a more traditional, mixed subsistence life-style to one that is commercialized and dependent on the tourist economy. The increase in tourism in the 1990's saw more Mayas abandoning their sustenance activities on the land, and becoming reliant entirely on commercial enterprises and wage labour of the tourism industry for their survival (Juarez, 2002).

In developed countries such as Canada, Zeppel (1998a) describes a different situation:

> For other indigenous peoples in developed countries though, growing recognition of land rights and resource ownership, together with the current trend for cultural revival, provides the main impetus for developing tourism. In this situation, appropriately managed tourism is seen as a sustainable activity that is generally consistent with indigenous values about the sanctity of the land and people's relationship to it. (65)

Notzke (1999) utilizes a case in Canada's Arctic to demonstrate the importance of control and the use of mixed economies. The Aboriginal economy consists of subsistence activities, transfer payments and wage labour, but one does not take precedence over the other (Notzke, 1999). Rather than giving up opportunities on the land for a chance to work in the wage labour sector of the economy, many community members have been able to "devise a flexible system of managing lands, resources, time and cash, engaging in both casual employment and

resource harvesting. The result is a mixed economy" (Notzke, 1999, 62). From this case and others found in New Zealand, Australia, and United States it is deemed important for Aboriginal communities to have control of their traditional land and to control the process of tourism development.

III. Sustainable Aboriginal Tourism Development

Control over tourism as described by Notzke (1999) and Zeppel (1998a) allows for Aboriginal communities to direct development according to their values and priorities. Milne (et al., 1995) illustrates priorities from an Aboriginal community's perspective, where sustainability is one component of the tourism development. Guidelines revealed in Milne et al. research includes development that is:

- Consistent with the abilities and aspirations of the host communities and respects northern cultures, expectations, and lifestyles
- Sustainable in terms of the use of natural resources
- Recognizes the spirit and intent of the land claims
- Includes extensive community and industry participation in the planning (Milne et al., 1995)

The literature also describes evaluative frameworks, which assess the likelihood for successful, sustainable Aboriginal tourism development including Smith's (1996) four H's and Sofield and Birtles' (1996) Indigenous People's Cultural Opportunity Spectrum. However, research on the ability for tourism to comprehensively impact sustainable community development has not been fully considered.

There are examples in the community development literature that begin to discuss sustainable community development from a broader perspective. It has been suggested that healthy, sustainable community consists of a number of common characteristics including:

- Quality of education,
- Ethical behaviour,
- Employment opportunities,
- Spiritual awareness,
- A healthy environment, and
- Good governance. (Ayre et al., 1999)

Hill (2004) articulates Aboriginal community sustainability from a conservation perspective, which consists of 'just' resolution to Aboriginal claims, cultural survival and healthy communities. The literature does not effectively link Aboriginal tourism with sustainable community development. A review of the Aboriginal community development literature can provide insight into how tourism may provide a role in supporting community development.

E. Aboriginal Community Development

Community development is such a broad concept that it is difficult to find a single agreed upon definition. Although definitions vary, there are common elements that indicate what is required for community development including: action taken by local people, finding solutions to community needs and priorities, improving the collective quality of life, building capacity within and the commitment to principles such as empowerment, equity and social justice. In examining Aboriginal community development Bell (1999a) provides a definition

that frames *aboriginal community development* as a "process that helps a community become healthy through the strengthening or restoration of primary relationships. It does this by building the community's capacity to recognize and build upon its strengths, plan for its future and deal with its problems" (44).

I. Aboriginal Community Development in Canada

In Canada, Australia and other countries around the world where colonial rule has been imposed on Aboriginal peoples, there is a history of failed development efforts (Eversole, 2003). In Canada, Aboriginal people have maintained that they are not interested in becoming part of the dominant culture but rather, "First Nations expect economic development activities to support, strengthen and incorporate traditional values and approaches" (Anderson, 1995, 312). Aboriginal people have long rejected the assumptions of the dominant society, in particular, that the loss of Aboriginal culture is inevitable or desirable (Flanagan & Zaferatos, 2000).

From an Aboriginal perspective, Paul (2000) states that, "The English had an ironclad conviction that their own culture was the ultimate. Thus they were blindly determined not to learn about or accept as equal the cultures of Americas. They sought only the suppression, by assimilation or more forceful means, of the citizens of these cultures" (50). The post-contact history that Paul (2000) describes from his research of the Mi'kmaq, illustrates the paternalistic approach the Canadian government has taken towards many aspects of Aboriginal life.

In Canada, the Indian Act is the legal framework for the "administration of aboriginal affairs under federal jurisdiction as stipulated in the British North

America Act of 1867" (Long & Dickason, 1996, 157). With the Indian Act in place, the Government of Canada officially took on the responsibility of running all aspects of Aboriginal community life. In Paul's (2000) estimation the Indian Act was, "the same policy the English had chosen to solve the Indian problem forever – extinction by assimilation" (203). As Lee (1992) describes, the political, economic, religious, education and family institutions of Aboriginal communities across the country were replaced by western imposed ideals. Aboriginal people were excluded from all meaningful forms of participation in governance of their own communities, up-rooted from their traditional territories and placed on reserves, denied the ability to practice their religious beliefs, and had their children taken away to be assimilated into Canadian life (Paul, 2000; Anderson 1995; Lee 1992).

Aboriginal people were grudgingly obedient to the Indian Affairs bureaucracy (Shewell, 2002), while economic development models were imposed upon their communities (Anderson, 1995; Elias, 1991). Changes began to occur after World War II, when Aboriginal people demanded that power be returned to their First Nations (Elias 1991). Changes to the Indian Act were insisted upon and although extensive alterations were discussed in Parliament, the revisions in 1951 and 1963 were merely administrative (Elias, 1991). In 1969 the then Minister of Indian Affairs, Jean Chretien, released the White Paper. Paul (2000), Elias (1991) and most Aboriginal politicians viewed this document as another attempt by the federal government to assimilate Aboriginal people into the modern Canadian mainstream.

The outright rejection of the White Paper across the country saw the birth of a number of reports produced by Aboriginal organizations calling for change (Long & Dickason, 1996). Elias (1991) suggests two reports in particular captured the views of many Aboriginal people: "Wahbung: Our Tomorrow, which The Council of Yukon Indians stressed individual interests but not at the expense of community" (11), and "Together Today for our Children Tomorrow, which the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood identified cultural development as a route to political and economic development "(13). Other reports thereafter, such as the Berger Report, various Parliamentary committee reports and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommended changes on how Aboriginal development should occur.

The common thread among these reports was that Aboriginal communities outlined a much more comprehensive approach to community development including; political, social, cultural as well as economic development (Elias, 1997, 1991; Anderson, 1995). Despite these opinions being presented to government, the strategy of economic development was still considered by the Canadian government as a viable means for First Nation development (Elias, 1991). The Aboriginal approach to development was considered by the federal government to be too costly and had not been tested to determine if it would have the intended impact (Warry, 2000; Elias, 1991). In 2004, a promising sign for change occurred when the Prime Minister of Canada, Paul Martin, concluded meetings with the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Phil Fontaine, and seventy Chiefs representing First Nations across the country. Phil Fontaine

stated there was agreement with the Prime Minister "that the old ways of dealing with native issues are not working and that there must be movement towards power sharing and native self-government" (CBC, 2004, 1).

Consultants and researchers have found that there are far more fundamental needs in terms of Aboriginal community development than just economic issues. A diversity of Aboriginal cultures requires a diversity of approaches (Cornell & Kalt, 1998; Hanson, 1985). Hanson, a consultant, believes that community development should focus on the individuals within the communities themselves and states there are "Duel realities requiring duel strategies" (1985, 1). Hanson describes Aboriginal individuals as either being able to adapt to the complex industrial society or those that remain attached to a traditional lifestyle (1985). To encourage community development Hanson (1985) suggests there is an "understanding and capacity required to respond directly to the Indian/Native people within each of the two contrasting realities. Through appropriate means, each socio-cultural group must be allowed to identify its needs and aspirations and develop its capabilities to achieve them in the manner and time frame they consider best" (1985, 17). Hanson (1985) discusses community development in terms of the needs of individuals and how the federal government's approach, in many cases, is only useful for individuals who are able to adapt to the mainstream, industrial society. This approach to community development is not intended for those who wish to maintain a traditional way of life and gives little value to this lifestyle. Understanding these realities allows community development to be approached from a different perspective.

II. International Aboriginal Community Development

A comparative analysis of economic development models conducted on fifteen reservations in the Southwest, Northwest and Northern plains of the United States uncovered interesting results (Cornell & Kalt 1998, 1990). As the movement in 1975 toward self-determination and Aboriginal control enabled decision-making powers to be in the hands of Aboriginal people, widespread economic development on reservations became possible. As Cornell and Kalt (1990) state, "economy follows sovereignty" (119) but sovereignty does not necessarily guarantee development. The authors illustrate that appropriate institutions are critical for successful development. Other factors such as resource rich lands, human capital and access to financial capital are not useful to Aboriginal communities if "tribes are incapable of making collective decisions and sustaining collective action, and if they lack the institutional structures necessary to maintain a hospitable environment for human and financial investment" (Cornell & Kalt, 1990, 119). It is strongly noted, in this and other research, that there is no one solution for all Aboriginal communities and that although development problems may be similar, solutions will be specific to each community (Bell, 1999a; Cornell & Kalt, 1998, 1990; Hollinsworth, 1996; Elias, 1991).

In the case of the Cochiti, a modern-day theocracy, a spiritual leader appoints officers in the community. Decision-making is controlled by cultural practices that are many centuries old and the Cochiti have had success in the modern economy while maintaining their traditional governance system. The

article states that, "the survival of the community – of the collective – [are] above the concerns and rights of the individual...Yet the Cochiti owns and operates one of the most successful community development corporations in Indian country" (Cornell & Kalt, 1990, 101).

Cornell and Kalt (1998) provide other examples that are similar to western concepts of governance and community development, and these have also been successful. The common theme the researchers uncovered was that those communities who have found their way out of poverty, have included sovereignty as their foundation and the following key elements:

- Stable institutions and policies
- Fair and effective dispute resolution mechanisms
- Separation of politics from business management
- A competent bureaucracy
- Cultural match (Cornell & Kalt, 1998)

Cornell and Kalt (1998) stress that sovereignty is a precondition of Aboriginal development and, "a decade of Harvard Project research has been unable to uncover a single case of sustained development that did not involve the recognition and effective exercise of tribal sovereignty: the practical assertion by tribes of their right and capacity to govern themselves" (210). This study considers the degree to which the Lennox Island First Nation actually has sovereignty and considers the elements that can flow from this sovereignty as described in the research conducted by Cornell and Kalt (1998, 1990).

Research conducted by Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2002) in the developing world describes how successful Aboriginal community development

occurs when local knowledge and the community's capacity for development are considered. A project in a rural village on the Solomon Islands, where previous attempts at economic development have failed, the community began an initiative to give the youth an attractive alternative to moving to the urban centers. A youth club was started where soccer was used to encourage youth and adults to participate. Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2002) states that:

> It was no accident that after the [youth] club used its initial profits from soccer and [dance] *mao* performances to start a bakery, members went on to begin agricultural activities, including planting gardens, transporting and selling copra, and then initiating a rice project. First, they were diversifying to make effective use of the variety of expertise within the group...Second, they diversified to ensure that the growth of a given activity remained within their ability to manage...Third reason for diversification was the comfort level project members felt with agriculture. (389)

Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo's (2002) research illustrates how community development is more likely to be sustainable and meaningful, if it is grounded in the knowledge system of the community. "Introduced models...have only encouraged people to leave the village. That is because they teach people an introduced body of knowledge and a set of skills that are neither suitable nor relevant of the local environment" (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2002, 401). From the research, it appears that appropriate knowledge and the capacity for the community to absorb and use this knowledge, is critical to ensure community development at an appropriate pace.

The literature presents a world-view that considers community and individual wellness to be the balance of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual

elements (Poonwassie & Charter, 2001; Wyrostok & Paulson, 2000). Research conducted by Simpson and Driben (2000) discusses the importance of maintaining the integrity of the environment and how this can affect the well-being of those who reside in an area. Flanagan and Zaferatos (2000) present bi-culturation as the ability to function in both the Aboriginal culture and the dominant culture and when practiced, can be an effective means of advancing community development objectives. Simpson (2005), Simpson et al., (2003) and Long and Dickason (1996) discuss capacity building and education and its importance in successful, sustainable community development. From a non-governmental organization's perspective, Eade (2000) suggests that for community development to be sustainable and people centered, one of the essential ingredients is building capacity within the community and fostering individual empowerment and participation equally between genders.

IV. Comprehensive Community Development

Although Aboriginal communities have been calling for comprehensive community development, few case studies exist in the literature. Through consulting work conducted by Bell (2000), a broad approach to community development has been considered in Canada's North. Table 3 includes Bell's (1999a) work, highlighted in grey, with additional concepts derived from the research literature that support and strengthen this comprehensive approach to community development.

Table 3: Modified Four C's

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Community Empowerment

- Governance
- Community control
- Organizational structures
- Representation
- Programs and services
- Resources
- Policy frameworks
- Links with other organizations

(Bell, 1999a)

- Sovereignty, appropriate institutions, self-determination (Cornell & Kalt, 1998, 1990)
- Vision and planning for comprehensive development (Elias 1997, 1991)
- Control of mixed economies (Notzke, 1999; Zeppel, 1998a)

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Community Economic Development

- Jobs and job development
- Businesses
- Investments
- Community economic development strategies
- Models, partnerships, support mechanisms

(Bell 1999a)

- Appropriate institutions where Aboriginal government is at arms length (Cornell & Kalt, 1998)
- Culturally oriented business people (Parker 1993)
- Economic independence, equitable relationships (Telfer, 2002a; Butler & Hinch, 1996)

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Community Wellness

- Physical, mental, social and spiritual health
- Relationship with the land
- Self-identity through traditional culture
- Healing
- Prevention
- Supportive relationships
- Links between personal and family needs, health care services
- Strong families

(Bell, 1999a)

- Legitimize traditional lifestyle (Hanson, 1985)
- Appropriate institutions (Cornell & Kalt, 1998, 1990) where healing and wellness occur
- Balance of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual elements (Poonwassie & Charter, 2001; Wyrostok & Paulson, 2000; Long & Dickason, 1996)
- Healthy land base, language, extended family, faith, vision and ethical behaviour (Simpson & Driben, 2000; Voyle and Simmons, 1999; Ayre and Clough, 1999)
- Internal creation (Warry, 2000), self-sufficiency and personal empowerment (Hassin and Young, 1999)

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Community Learning

- Community as classroom
- Land as a classroom
- Acquiring wisdom from Elders
- Schooling
- Individual and group learning
- Literacy and adult basic education
- Skill development and training

(Bell, 1999a)

- Being ready to take on knowledge (Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo, 2002) and the abilities and aspirations of communities (Milne et al., 1995)
- Appropriate institutions (Cornell & Kalt, 1998) where community learning takes place
- Experiential education (Harris and Wearing, 1999)
- Collective and individual capacity building (Simpson, 2005; Simpson et al., 2003; Colton, 2003, 2000b; Warry, 2000; Eade, 2000; Long & Dickason, 1996)
- Traditional Knowledge (MacGregor, 1993)

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Source: Shaded Areas from Bell (1999a)

The Four C's consist of:

- **Community Economic Development** has been subject to extensive academic review, particularly relating to tourism development (Telfer, 2002a; Bell, 1999a; Butler & Hinch, 1996; Parker, 1993; Cornell & Kalt, 1990). As seen in Elias (1997, 1991), the federal government has promoted economic initiatives as the key road to successful Aboriginal community development. Cornell and Kalt's (1998) research states that the "jobs and income" (191) approach which looks at only the economic side of the equation of community development, seldom produces lasting economic prosperity.
- **Community Empowerment** is discussed academically in both the tourism (Notzke, 1999; Zeppel, 1998a) and community development literature (Bell, 1999a; Cornell & Kalt, 1998, 1990; Elias, 1997, 1991). Community Empowerment describes the fundamental steps toward control over specific development initiatives and control of one's own destiny.
- **Community Learning** refers to acquisition of knowledge and its relationship to building capacity in the community (Colton, 2003; Warry, 2000; Eade, 2000; Long & Dickason, 1996). In Table 1, the concept of 'knowledge' can come from many different sources including 'Traditional Knowledge', where it is passed down from generation to generation (Harris & Wearing, 1999; MacGregor, 1993) or from more formal institutions. In the literature Community Learning is linked to community empowerment and economic development by way of building capacity

within communities (Simpson, 2005; Simpson et al., 2003; Colton, 2000; Bell, 2000).

- **Community Wellness** refers to a healthy, balanced relationship to oneself, to each other, and between people and the land (Poonwassie and Charter, 2001; Wyrostok and Paulson 2000; Simpson and Driben, 2000; Bell, 1999 a, b; Long and Dickason, 1996). Community Wellness alone is not well linked to community empowerment or economic development in the literature. In contrast, Community Wellness and learning have been linked and are discussed in terms of building strength within individuals (Warry, 2000; Long & Dickason, 1996).

Over the past number of decades, the main focus of the Canadian government has been on Community Economic Development and there has often been reluctance to consider Aboriginal Empowerment in the fullest sense (Elias, 1997, 1991; Anderson, 1995). Community Empowerment on the other hand, is where Aboriginal governments have focused their energies and in particular on self-determination (Bell, 1999a). The leadership of many First Nations view Community Economic Development as the next most important issue facing the community after Empowerment (Bell, 1999a; Cornell & Kalt, 1998). When Bell asks community participants to analyze the relationship among the Four C's and prioritize them,

> they recognize that the quadrants are inter-related, but in terms of priorities, the two on the bottom -- Community Wellness and Community Learning -- must be given priority. Without Community Wellness and

> Community Learning there can be no Community Empowerment and Community Economic Development (1999a, 39).

With the different approaches used by the federal government, Aboriginal governments, and community members, it is not surprising so many community development projects fail.

F. Literature Discussion and Implications for Lennox Island

In reviewing the literature, three key themes have emerged that are of interest to this research. The themes include:

- Choosing Aboriginal tourism
- Connection to the land
- A comprehensive approach to community development

I. Choosing Aboriginal Tourism

Fascination with other cultures dates back to the origins of tourism itself (Hinch & Butler, 1996) and recently, Aboriginal communities have been able to offer a unique tourist experience of both nature and culture (Williams & Richter, 2002; Colton 2000a; Zeppel, 1998b). There is demand for Aboriginal tourism and communities are choosing to participate in the tourism industry as a viable form of community development (Notzke, 1999; Zeppel, 1998a). The reasons vary but the positive benefits, such as economic prosperity, the rejuvenation of cultural activities (Hiwasaki, 2000; Colton, 2000a; Hinch & Butler, 1996; Parker, 1993), control and self-reliance (Brown, 1999; Burlo, 1996; Milne, et al., 1991), are key factors. Economic benefits are only one component of developing Aboriginal tourism. Equally important are respect for the land/environment (Riemer 2004;

Parker, 1993), showcasing one's cultural traditions (Medina, 2003), and pursuing political recognition (Hiwasaki, 2000).

The Lennox Island First Nation has decided to pursue ecotourism as a form of community development based on community consultations. Economic development is certainly a key factor for this pursuit but it is not the only reason (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000). This research will explore how ecotourism affects economic as well as social, political and environmental factors on Lennox Island.

II. Connection to the Land

When Aboriginal creation stories, songs, dances, masks and sustenance come from one's traditional territory (Henderson 2004), a different relationship exists with the land/environment from that of non-aboriginal peoples (Simpson & Driben, 2000). For sustainability to be fully considered and implemented, the concept of a 'connection to a traditional territory/place' needs to be more fully explored. Through tourism development, sustainability from an Aboriginal perspective has the opportunity to take root and potentially serve as the core for community development.

With a passionate connection to a place comes respect for all that makes up that place (Poonwassie & Charter, 2001; Choudhury, 1997; MacGregor, 1993). Based on the researcher's own experience working with Aboriginal peoples and in particular with Elders and Nino'gad, the knowledgeable ones, this notion of an inseparable connection to a traditional territory/place is persistent in Aboriginal communities today (Henderson, 2004). Perhaps through this study,

this connection to a specific place may be revealed by the Lennox Island First Nation and in turn provide further understanding to the concept of sustainable Aboriginal tourism development.

III. Comprehensive Community Development

Aboriginal communities have been calling for a comprehensive approach to community development in Canada since the federal government began hearing their concerns (Elias, 1991). The federal government has continually ignored calls for comprehensive development and pursued its own goal of assimilation through economic development and other measures (Paul, 2000; Warry, 2000; Elias, 1997, 1991). Pieces of the comprehensive community development puzzle are provided in the academic literature but examples of studies that look at Aboriginal community development from a comprehensive approach are limited.

Hanson (1985) provides some useful insight into Aboriginal community development and how there are two types of strategies needed, one for those who are able to adapt to the modern economy and another for those who are interested in pursuing traditional activities. Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2002) discuss knowledge and the importance of ensuring that the proposed development is within the capabilities of the individuals within the community and is at a pace that the community establishes. Cornell and Kalt (1998, 1990) illustrate the importance of sovereignty and those Aboriginal communities that "build governing institutions capable of the effective exercise of sovereignty are the ones most likely to achieve long-term, self-determined economic prosperity"

(1998, 212). Other authors (Wyrostok & Paulson, 2000; Ayre et al., 1999; Voyle & Simmons, 1999) have looked at the make-up of healthy communities and the importance of healing and wellness in community development (Poonwassie & Charter, 2001; Warry, 2000; Simpson & Driben, 2000; Hassin & Young, 1999; Long & Dickason, 1996). A variety of authors (Simpson 2005; Simpson et al., 2003; Eade, 2000; Harris & Wearing, 1999; Long & Dickason, 1996) discuss education and capacity building and their importance to the success of community development. The noted authors have each provided valuable research into the individual pieces of the community development puzzle.

From Bell's two decades of experience working with Aboriginal communities in northern Canada and listening to issues important to a community, he suggests there is a lack of emphasis on Community Learning and Community Wellness in the development process (1999 a, b). Much of the emphasis from the federal government has been on Community Economic Development, while the focus of Aboriginal government has been Community Empowerment. Although the academic literature has discussed both issues, as they relate to Aboriginal tourism development (MacIntosh, 2004; Hiwasaki, 2000), there has been very little research related to community wellness as it relates to tourism development.

G. Conclusion

Through the literature review it has been established that there is an interest by Aboriginal communities to pursue tourism as a viable form of community development. The literature provides individual pieces to the puzzle

of how ecotourism can have an impact on Aboriginal community development. This research study will examine ecotourism's impact on economic factors as well as cultural, political, environmental and social issues that are important to overall community development. Given the Lennox Island First Nation's pursuit of ecotourism, an examination of community development with a broad lens may reveal how a comprehensive approach can contribute to a more meaningful and more sustainable forms of community development.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

A. Research Approach

Most tourism research "lies on a continuum between positivist and interpretivist epistemological paradigms" (Schuler et al., 1999, 62). Leisure scientists (Samdahl, 1999) believe the interpretive research approach is better suited to reveal meanings and processes that are associated with the study of leisure rather than the more traditional positivist approach. The type of research this study will pursue on Lennox Island is derived from the interpretive research paradigm.

The interpretive paradigm is an attempt to study "social reality from the inside by reconstructing in narrative form the lived experience, motives and meanings of those who constitute or participate in that reality" (Schuler et al., 1999, 62). The interpretive approach is also a "systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds" (Neuman, 2000, 71). This approach is interactive, takes place in a localized setting and is focused on the cultural meaning of reality.

I. Trustworthiness

Qualitative research is often criticized for its unreliability of research outcomes and lack of rigor (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In qualitative research, the

concept of reliability is discussed in the literature as a product of trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There are four central criteria utilized to determine trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Decrop, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend ways to strengthen these attributes so that the trustworthiness of the research can be established.

Credibility determines how truthful particular findings are (Decrop, 1999). For improving credibility the researcher needs to consider:

1. Activities that make it more likely that credible findings and interpretations will be produced (prolonged engagement, triangulation, persistent observation)
2. An activity that provides an external check on the inquiry process (peer debriefing)
3. An activity that provides for the direct test of findings and interpretations from the source which they have come (member checks)

Developing trustworthiness in this study was approached from several perspectives. Reviewing internal Lennox Island documentation, participant observation, and in-depth interview data were triangulated to improve credibility (Finn et al., 2000; Neuman, 2000; Decrop, 1999) and to develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena in question.

Peer debriefing occurred on a regular basis throughout the study and member checks were used to assist in interpreting the data (Decrop, 1999). The member checks consisted of participants being sent their verbatim transcripts and asked to comment on the work for accuracy. Also, electronic copies of the

results chapter were sent and participants were asked to provide feedback on the emerging analysis of the information to ensure the correct meaning was captured (Neuman, 2000; Decrop, 1999; Janesick, 1998).

Transferability is "how applicable the research findings are to another setting or group" (Decrop, 1999, 158). It is anticipated that the research findings from the Lennox Island First Nation will be applicable to additional settings but, it will be others who will reach a conclusion about whether a transfer is possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

It is difficult in qualitative research to make study results consistent and reproducible but the literature suggests how dependability can be strengthened. Strengthening dependability occurs through an inquiry audit and is used to examine the research process and product (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The inquiry audit has a person(s) who plays 'devil's advocate' and "regularly reviews the data gathering and analysis process to confirm adherence to sound research practices. This is to ensure a consistency of rigor in the qualitative approach" (Decrop, 1999, 159). The inquiry audit was on-going throughout this study and included weekly meetings with the ecotourism manager and/or my supervisor.

Confirmability refers to how neutral the research findings are, in relation to the researcher's bias (Decrop, 1999). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest confirmability is determined by an audit that includes peer review, triangulation, and the use of a field journal to ensure bias is kept in check. Earlier in this study a candid disclosure of the my bias was attempted (Neuman, 2000) and to strengthen confirmability the following steps were taken;

- Field journal entries of personal experiences and assumptions that I could later reflect upon,
- Cross-referencing a number of different data sources converging on a similar theme was used and then filtered through a peer evaluation process.

The above techniques were used in an attempt to reduce researcher bias.

II. Cross-Cultural Research on Lennox Island

Aboriginal communities construct reality through a different set of criteria than western scientific inquiry (Johnson, 1992). For example, Traditional Ecological Knowledge is one such method in which Aboriginal peoples view the world (Berneshawi, 1997; Johnson, 1992). Traditional Ecological Knowledge is a form of knowledge generated through generations of close contact with the surrounding environment and is passed on through oral traditions (Johnson, 1992). In Aboriginal communities, beliefs are constructed through cultural, traditional and ecological meanings of the world (Samdahl, 1999; Berneshawi, 1997) and these beliefs are important considerations when conducting research in a cross-cultural context (Berno, 1996). In this study the interpretive approach allowed me to explore these complex realities in a collaborative manner, which uncovered socially constructed meaning that was important to the Lennox Island community members.

The methods used under the interpretive research paradigm enabled me to gather information in a culturally sensitive manner. For example, Berno (1996) states that, "In a culture with an oral tradition, subjects are more comfortable with verbal discourse which allows them to explain and exemplify their thoughts and

feelings than with a structured interview. The data obtained are often higher in validity and authenticity than those elicited by questionnaires...as sampling in qualitative research poses fewer problems" (390).

Based on the nature of this study with the Lennox Island First Nation and the appropriateness of the interpretivist approach in cross-cultural research, the choice to conduct research through this paradigm came naturally. A final factor in choosing this approach is based on my personal experience working with Aboriginal communities. Being immersed in the day-to-day activities has proven to be an effective way to gather information and gain understanding into the realities of Aboriginal peoples. Through discussions with the Lennox Island First Nation, the interpretivist approach was presented as an appropriate methodology for conducting research in the community.

The interpretive paradigm allowed me to become immersed in the Lennox Island community and explore, with community members, the impacts ecotourism has had on community development. To understand these impacts it was necessary to gain an understanding of the individually constructed meanings and understandings of community members (Neuman, 2000). Methods consistent with the interpretive research paradigm, such as participant observation and face-to-face interviews, were utilized for this research.

B. Methods

This study was conducted in a cross-cultural context and the methods used were flexible and conformed to community protocol (Schuler et al., 1999). Experience from working with First Nations has illustrated that following

proper protocol is very important in Aboriginal communities. Throughout the information-gathering phase I was cognizant of the importance of protocol and searched to understand and respect this as much as possible.

In working with the Lennox Island First Nation the following steps were initiated to establish a working relationship and attempt to understand protocol issues:

- An introductory meeting with the Ecotourism Manager of the Lennox Island First Nation was held in May 2003. This was to gain an understanding of the ecotourism development and to explore the potential for a partnership between the Lennox Island First Nation and Acadia University to develop meaningful research.
- In November 2003, a proposal was presented to the Ecotourism Manager detailing the type of research that could potentially be conducted with the Lennox Island First Nation and the products that would be produced.
- With slight modifications to the proposal, a meeting was held in February 2004, with the Chief and a Councilor to present the potential research study. From this meeting the Chief granted permission for the research project to proceed and direction was given to work with the Lennox Island Ecotourism Manager.
- Discussions with the Ecotourism Manager were on-going and on March 24, 2004, details for the research project were established.
- On July 12, 2004, I met with Chief, Council and the administration to summarize the purpose of the research project and proposed approach that would be used. Approval to proceed was given, key informants were identified and data collection began.
- Informal meetings were regularly held with the Ecotourism Manager throughout the field research portion of the project, July-August 2004.

- In October 2004, the transcriptions of each interview were sent to all participants with a follow-up conversation with the Ecotourism Manager to ensure that each participant received their transcripts.
- February 2005, member checks were conducted via electronic copies being sent out to interview participants.
- Upon completion of the research project a copy will be submitted to Chief and Council of the Lennox Island First Nation and the Ecotourism Manager as well as an offer to present the findings of the study to the community.

I. Research Participants and Fieldwork

Research in the community of Lennox Island was conducted in the summer of 2004. I lived on the reserve for six weeks and became involved in many community activities including conducting soccer clinics, removing dead trees on the ecotourism trail, and going out to cheer on the Lennox Island baseball team. Informal conversations allowed me to meet many community members and become familiar with life on the reserve.

Meeting with Chief and Council, and working closely with the Ecotourism Manager, enabled me to identify individuals in the community who would be approached to participate in the study. Determining who should be in the sample population was based on the individual's relevance to the research topic rather than their representativeness of the entire population (Neuman, 2000). Initial key informants were identified by the leadership and then the snowball-sampling technique (Neuman, 2000) was used to obtain the remainder of the sample population.

The data collection methods began with participant observation, where general discussions with residents regarding the ecotourism development occurred and field journal entries were made. In-depth interviews followed once there was an increased understanding in community about this research study. A more detailed description of each method is provided:

(i) Participant Observation

Participant observation is something that "everyone does in newly encountered social situations" (Spradley, 1980, 53). The observer tries to become aware of what is already common knowledge of those being observed. There are four different types of participant observation described Merriam (1988) including:

1. Complete Participant – the participant's role as researcher is unknown to group being studied and participates in daily activities, ethical dilemmas arise.
2. Participant as Observer – primary role of researcher is as participant rather than researcher. Issue of concern is confidentiality and the depth of information revealed.
3. Observer as Participant – researcher acts as participant but primary role is data gatherer. Community is aware of and supports researcher's role as primary data gatherer.
4. Complete Observer – researcher is hidden and unknown to the community. Again ethical dilemmas arise. (2000a, 67)

Participant observation occurred throughout the fieldwork and both 'Participant as Observer' and 'Observer as Participant' techniques were utilized as a source of data gathering. The less formal and more interactive approach, 'Participant as Observer', method was utilized to develop relationships in the community, inform

the community about the research being conducted and to build trust. A shift to 'Observer as Participant' occurred near to the end of the data gathering process, when there was a greater understanding and trust established within the community. The focus when I shifted to 'Observer as a Participant' was to continue to participate in community activities but shift the primary role from participation to data gathering.

Neuman (2000) describes a range of field note methods that can be employed while gathering data through participant observation. Two specific types were utilized while conducting this study on Lennox Island. The first is 'Direct Observation Notes', where the researcher "writes immediately after leaving the field...and to the extent possible, they are an exact recording of the particular words, phrases, or actions" (Neuman, 2000, 364). After informal interviews with community members the 'Direct Observation Notes' were valuable for two reasons. I was able to gain a better understanding of the ecotourism development from the community member's perspective and these field notes were used as a component in data triangulation in order to improve the credibility of the research.

The second field note method that was employed was 'Personal Notes'. Neuman (2000) describes 'Personal Notes' as serving three functions: "They provide an outlet for a researcher and a way to cope with stress; they are a source of data about personal reactions; they give him or her a way to evaluate direct observation notes" (366). I used 'Personal Notes' to reveal personal

reactions and help to uncover my bias. These notes were also used to provide context to the data gathering techniques being utilized in this study.

(ii) In-depth Interviews

"Interviews are conversations where the outcome is a coproduction of the interviewer and the subject" (Kvale, 1996, xvii). Interviews allow the researcher to gain insight into how others view the world (Neuman, 2000; Schuler et al., 1999; Kvale, 1996). As Berno (1996) contends, unstructured interviews in cultures with an oral tradition can result in data that is rich in detail and depth.

A common question that arises is, how many interview subjects are needed (Neuman, 2000)? Kvale (1996) answers this question as follows, "Interview as many subjects as necessary to find out what you need to know" (101). Kvale (1996) also suggests that interviews should be conducted until a point of saturation is reached, "where further interviews yield little new knowledge" (102). I had permission to tape thirteen in-depth interviews, and conducted a total of fifteen interviews with selected Lennox Island community members. Two Elders did not wish to be taped or sign a consent form and those wishes were respected. I asked permission to take notes during the interview, which was granted in both cases, but found this not an effective data gathering technique. It was felt that after conducting fifteen interviews, a point of saturation was being realized.

The key informants identified from the Lennox Island community were individuals who were knowledgeable about the ecotourism development. Along with this knowledge, individuals interviewed included community members who

had an understanding in specific fields such as health, education, economic development, treaty negotiations, community and business development. The participants included youth, Elders, community leaders and those who still practice Mi'kmaq traditional ways and consider themselves traditionalists.

C. Data Analysis

Data analysis included reviewing two main sources of information. Primary data, which included field notes and interview transcriptions, and secondary data sources such as video, the Strategic Plan and Lennox Island documents were considered and integrated into a single process, described by Neuman (2000) as an open coding system. The open coding system positions information that is similar into general categories based on the purpose of the research and concepts found in the literature (Neuman, 2000). Through the use of a computer software program, ATLAS.ti, management and organization of the data was optimized. "In the course of such a qualitative analysis, ATLAS.ti helps to uncover the complex phenomena hidden in data in an exploratory way" (ATLAS.ti, 2004). The computer software program assisted me in establishing a systematic process for analyzing data.

Axial coding was used to conduct a secondary review of the data and examine emerging categories and refine each into themes and sub-themes (Neuman, 2000). From axial coding, themes and linkages were identified between the data, the purpose of the research, and concepts found in the literature. Confirmation of these themes occurred through peer review and

member checks to ensure the correct interpretation of themes and sub-themes were identified (Decrop, 1999; Janesick, 1998).

D. Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines set out by the Research Ethics Board at Acadia University were adhered to throughout this research project. An application to conduct research on Lennox Island was submitted to the Research Ethics Board and received approval before the fieldwork commenced. Participation in this research project was voluntary and consent forms (Appendix A) that explained the nature of the study were given to each participant to read and sign before any taped interviews were conducted.

Within a small community, it is difficult to protect the identity of individuals who voluntarily participate in research. Given the fact that 'everyone knows everyone' in a small community, only the data gathered that had direct relevance to this thesis was considered. In certain instances self-censorship occurred. For example when data related to an individual's health was revealed, I decided that this information was 'too personal' and could potentially expose the participant's identity and therefore, decided against using the data. All those who agreed to participate and signed consent forms, were given pseudonyms and in some cases gender may have been reversed to further protect an individual's identity.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS

A. Introduction

The purpose of this thesis was to examine how the current ecotourism initiative has impacted community development on Lennox Island. As in many community based research projects, the data collected is incomplete without understanding its link to the community and the community-based issues. As a result, this chapter will illustrate the connection between life on Lennox Island and the emergence and implications of the ecotourism development.

At first glance, the community of Lennox Island appears to be doing well – many streets were paved and kept clean, yards are kept up with an abundance of flower gardens, fishing boats and lobster traps appear to be well maintained. My previous experience working with other Aboriginal communities had prepared me for a much more depressed economic state than I found on Lennox Island. As soon as I arrived I perceived this community as having some form of successful community development initiatives.

In February 2004, along with my supervisor, I met with the Chief and Council and the management team of the Lennox Island Ecotourism project. The meeting went well and set the stage for this research project for both the Lennox Island First Nation and Acadia University.

Participant observation and fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted from the beginning of July to the end of August 2004. The in-depth interviews were conducted with both the administration and employees of the ecotourism

project as well as business owners and community members. Field notes were used to better understand the context in which the community issues were raised and to uncover some of my own biases. The qualitative data gathered from the fieldwork revealed several key themes and sub-themes related to ecotourism and community development. These are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4: Results Summary: Major Themes and Sub-themes

1) Ecotourism and the Lennox Island Economy I. Economic Impact of Ecotourism (i) Employment opportunities and impacts (ii) Building capacity within the community (iii) The fit of ecotourism within overall community development (iv) Built on Lennox Island's strength and economic viability
2) Influence of Ecotourism on Aspects of Community Empowerment I. Perspectives on Empowerment (i) Empowered decision making (ii) Community control and Lennox Island's destiny (iii) Self-determination
3) The Impact Ecotourism has on Cultural Knowledge and Learning I. Perspectives on Cultural Knowledge (i) Impacts of Catholicism (ii) The state of cultural knowledge (iii) Learning traditional knowledge (iv) Incorporating Elders in the ecotourism programming II. Cultural Commoditization (i) Cultural knowledge not for sale (ii) The sale of culture III. Perspectives on Cross-Cultural Learning (i) Cross-cultural learning (ii) Building cross-cultural relationships with neighbors

Table 4: Results Summary: Major Themes and Sub-themes (continued)

4) Community Wellness I. Perspectives on Relationships and Individual Empowerment (i) Strengthening community relationships (ii) Re-establishing cultural identity and building community pride II. Perceptions on Important Community Wellness Issues (i) Substance abuse and cultural rules (ii) Community use of the Path
5) Environmental Stewardship I. Stewardship as a Part of Community Development (i) A set of guiding principles for community development (ii) A glimpse into the stewardship philosophy and its practice

B. Results

1) Ecotourism and the Lennox Island Economy

Arriving on Lennox Island to conduct my research, I met Davis, a community member who I had met on my first visit. I joined him on a trip to the hardware store in his new truck. During the drive, Davis began to share his views and knowledge about Lennox Island and some of the historic, social, cultural and economic issues facing the community.

The current success of Lennox Island's community economic development initiatives, according to Davis, has come from three specific areas:

- Commercial fishery, a seasonal employer, which Davis believes is the most important,
- Full-time jobs at the 'Band office' and the services provided
- Tourism sector jobs which includes seasonal employment in various public and private ventures (Field Notes, July, 2004)

This section examines the ecotourism economy of the Lennox Island First Nation through a broad lens. Through this examination a clearer understanding of how ecotourism is being used to create jobs, build capacity and impact overall economic development on Lennox Island will be revealed.

I. Economic Impacts of Ecotourism

(i) Employment opportunities and impacts

There are approximately 400 people currently living on Lennox Island. The tourism industry accounts for 40-45 jobs and a significant portion of these jobs are directly related to the ecotourism project. Many of the ecotourism jobs are held by youth and Elders in the community and Betty states, "The ecotourism initiative now employs a lot more people in the summer" (August 26, 2004). Jobs from the tourism industry on Lennox Island account for roughly ten percent of total employment and many of the youth, through informal conversations and formal interviews, commented on what they feel is a very important and tangible benefit, "it has made it [Lennox Island] into a great big tourist destination. Back then, the only time people would come down was for St. Anne's Sunday. Basically, ecotourism has brought more jobs for the community" (Mike, August 20, 2004). An increase in jobs is a common benefit of tourism development and those in the community that I spoke with were very supportive and enthusiastic about the future summer employment opportunities that would be available due to the ecotourism initiative.

Having a job close to home that 'pays the bills' and develops individual capacity is certainly important for community development, but other benefits can be just as important. Missy describes her thoughts on what a job provides her,

> they were the first people who gave me an opportunity to actually see what I can do...It made me think about how much I can accomplish...I think it helped my self-esteem. (Missy, August 25, 2004)

Employment opportunities associated with ecotourism have provided non-monetary benefits and are responsible, in part, for building capacity within individuals.

(ii) Building capacity within the community

Building capacity is a critical component of community development (Eade, 2000) and, in the case of Lennox Island, occurs in two specific areas. First, Fred indicates "there is a seasonality to tourism and they are low paying jobs in general" (August 24, 2004) but there is value in having these jobs. He indicates that the low pay and the short work period are not necessarily a bad thing because, for many of the youth, it is their first job. Fred goes on and states,

> if the better workers complete their work at the ecotourism program, there is a greater chance they will succeed outside...In some ways they are very much training jobs. (August 24, 2004)

Fred understands that the development is not going to supply youth with full time, high wage employment but the project can be used for training and building capacity within individuals so that community members can move on to other opportunities. That the project provides entrance level employment where youth can gain valuable transferable skills and experience, is an important

acknowledgement. Those that succeed at this level will potentially have more confidence and a new set of skills necessary for other employment opportunities.

A second outcome has been to foster the ability for the Lennox Island First Nation members to create business opportunities. In 2004, a café offering Aboriginal foods, and a boat charter business were created and operated out of the ecotourism facility. These join the already established kayaking business, and a craft, bakery and pottery shop which are located in the community. Merv suggested that the ecotourism center is filled only to "two thirds of its intended capacity" (Field Notes July, 2004) and there is still potential to increase private business opportunities just within the center itself. These business and investment opportunities are an important factor that ecotourism development has facilitated.

> There are several projects on the horizon where there will be private business involvement and really the ecotourism program is like a public foundation for private benefit off of the infrastructure that has been put in place. (Merv, August 24, 2004)

Ecotourism has enabled the development of an infrastructure base that supports the creation of private enterprise in the community. Those who choose to initiate a business venture are themselves developing their own capacity and increasing the capacity of the community overall.

(iii) <u>The fit of ecotourism within overall community development</u>

Although there was no consensus on how large an impact ecotourism has on development on Lennox Island, all the participants interviewed agreed that it has an important role to play. Carl, who is an employee of the ecotourism

development, states it, "fits very well, it is a minor component at present, but I think if they build the way they are going now it may out rival the major employers here on the island" (August 23, 2004). In another instance Sue, who is not employed in the project, views the impact as much larger:

> I would say it is a huge part because it is bringing in a lot of tourists, the ecotourism complex, the cultural center and the Path of our Forefathers and together those three would make half of a pie sheet. (August 22, 2004)

Half of all the economic activity that occurs on Lennox Island may be a slight overestimation but, from Sue's perspective, ecotourism's contribution is very important. The remainder of interviewees perceived the ecotourism project as having less impact than Sue but also having an important role to play in community development. Other individuals interviewed stated how ecotourism contributes positively to economic development and can assist in diversifying the economy. Fred indicates, "in some ways, now that [the] ecotourism side of things has been realized...you don't want to have all your eggs in one basket" (August 24, 2004). Although ecotourism will not be the instant solution that fixes all the economic issues of the community, it is playing a role in diversifying the economy of Lennox Island.

(iv) Built on Lennox Island's strengths and economic viability

According to Fred, "Whether it is [eco] tourism, [bio] sciences [center] or [wind] energy, I think picking options that make sense...Lennox Island will build an economy on its strengths" (August 24, 2004). Community development projects on Lennox Island move forward based on two key factors: their strengths

and their ability to generate revenue. Building on Lennox Island's strengths ensures grounding in community knowledge. This in turn enables full participation by the members.

Generating revenue is also a key element to the development agenda and the ecotourism project was chosen by the community to, among other things, realize a profit. Fred understands that there are other benefits from ecotourism but states,

> By having an overt expression of traditional culture here, if it makes it easier to take up drumming, take up the language, hopefully there are spin offs in more ways than economic but, ultimately, it has to pay its bills and not be a drain and we are really cognizant of that. (August 24, 2004)

The economic principles are extremely important and the project has to 'pay its own way'. Sound economic principles are one of the keys to any successful business development and, from Fred's comment, it is no different on Lennox Island.

In summary, the Lennox Island First Nation has embraced ecotourism as a tool for community economic development but understands that it is not a panacea for addressing the full range of economic issues of its members. There is, however, no doubt that the employment opportunities generated from ecotourism are significant. And although these jobs are seasonal and low paying, management sees these as 'training jobs' and a way to build individual capacity. Business and investment opportunities have been facilitated with the introduction of ecotourism infrastructure and capacity continues to expand among Lennox Island members with two new ecotourism businesses established in 2004.

Ecotourism allows Lennox Island to focus on its strengths, while maintaining sound economic viability. For many on Lennox Island, the ecotourism project is seen as a 'bright light' in the community's economic development future.

2) Influence of Ecotourism on Aspects of Community Empowerment

For centuries, Aboriginal peoples were self sufficient, governing themselves based on their rich heritage. Since colonization, the federal government has had a fiduciary responsibility for caring for First Nations people (Paul, 2000; Bell, 1999). From this responsibility have come many community development projects that have had very little meaningful consultation with the communities being cared for (Elias, 1991). Aboriginal people across the country are fighting to re-gain the ability to rule and care for themselves.

Ecotourism has contributed to a new way of decision making on Lennox Island and has helped members to feel empowered that they have control over development projects. The struggle to re-gain self-determination continues to be central to the Lennox Island First Nation leadership and ecotourism has contributed in a small way to that goal.

I. Perspectives on Empowerment

(i) Empowered decision making process

In working with many Aboriginal communities in the past, I noted that it seemed to be extremely difficult for community leaders to make decisions that were perceived to be unbiased by community members. This is particularly the case when hiring or choosing between community members to complete a

project. In a conversation with Prilla, it was felt that the pendulum had swung to the opposite end of the spectrum so that "if the candidate being hired is related in any way to Chief and Council, they will not get hired" (Field Notes, August, 2004). In one specific instance, the Lennox Island leadership had a decision to make that could have easily divided the community. The decision was to determine which of two business proposals should be chosen to operate the café in the ecotourism complex. Both applicants had relatives within the leadership and to ensure a fair evaluation of the proposals, a unique process was developed by the ecotourism management. Merv outlined the process as follows,

> we had two good proposals...so we developed a very clear set of guidelines...they [Chief and Council] asked us to take care of the selection so we set out very clear parameters. We chose a committee of seven people and had a pre-arranged scoring system...then we made recommendations back to Chief and Council...so in a small community, what could have been a very contentious issue was handled very well and at the end of the day everybody said that it was the fairest way possible. (August 24, 2004)

In this particular instance, the leadership stayed at 'arms length' from the decision making process and made the final decision based on the recommendations of the committee. With the success of this decision making process established, it was noted by Merv that "future contentious decisions would likely occur in the same manner" (August 24, 2004). This type of 'arms length' decision making process has been noted in the literature (Cornell & Kalt, 1998, 1990) as being important to community development, yet often difficult to obtain.

(ii) Community control and Lennox Island's destiny

Understanding how decisions are made from the top-down is important but also of interest was how the community controls the decision making process. In terms of how much the community has control over development projects, Prilla, an administrator, states,

> the community members have a lot of control...I think we have a very outspoken community but they are very reasonable...to the leadership they [some individuals] are like thorns in their side...but if you don't have that in the community then there is nobody to answer to. (Prilla, August 24, 2004)

From Prilla's point of view, the community retains control over decisions that are made on Lennox Island and certain individuals keep the leadership in check.

Another perspective comes from a youth in the community. She felt that there is some sort of control over projects but has less conviction over how much control the community actually has, "I know that the community members have meetings with the Chief...The community members have a bit of control but the Chief and Council make the final decision" (Crystal, August 20, 2004). When discussing the issue with Tina, she felt that there was "a lot of listening. I think that is all the Chief [name withheld] did and many, many meetings [occurred] before a decision was made" (August 26, 2004). From the comments made by Crystal and Tina, it would appear that the leadership listens to the issues of the community and then, based on the information, makes a decision. This

engagement by the leadership may be one reason there is a sense of control many members feel over the ecotourism and other community projects.

(iii) Self-determination

Through informal discussions and individual interviews, the community seemed less than optimistic about the First Nation's ability to control its own destiny. Betty, familiar with the politics of the Lennox Island First Nation, discussed independence and the Indian Act. Betty states, "I think we are becoming more independent but we can't just cut everything off because it took us this long to adapt to the Indian Act and to just take it away would be setting us up for failure" (August 26, 2004). Davis, who is a little more defiant when discussing the issue of control and Lennox Island's destiny states,

> they [federal government] set down all these rules and regulations that we have to abide by. They still control us, they may say they don't, but when you sit down and look at it, they have more control than they are letting on. (August 24, 2004)

Davis is not happy with the situation but informs me that this is the "Natives struggle across the country" (August 24, 2004) and around the world. From Betty and Davis' perspective the Lennox Island First Nation has little control over its own destiny.

The ecotourism development has a role to play in Lennox Island's aspirations for self-determination. Being politically, culturally and economically independent are important steps for a First Nation to pursue on the road to self-determination (Cornell & Kalt, 1998, 1990; Elias, 1991). The constraints of the Indian Act and the reliance on federal government funding for community

development projects makes it difficult to be completely independent. Fred considers a practical way to work towards independence,

> it depends what sovereignty is. Is sovereignty a name on a treaty or is it independence? In many ways...through development, Lennox Island could be economically independent or in a sense sovereign. That is one way they are pursuing self-determination, by becoming masters of their own economic destiny. (August 24, 2004)

Ecotourism is one component that can play a role in the Lennox Island First Nation becoming more economically independent. But, from Fred's perspective, how likely this is to occur is questionable,

> as people are looking for money to come down the pipe, there is not independence either. So, it is at the point if they were self-determinant in every way, that it funded its own operations through its own initiatives and generations of funds, then that's when they will get true independence. Whether that is likely to happen, PEI is certainly not independent so what chance does a small community within PEI have at being thoroughly independent. (August 24, 2004)

Ecotourism has a role to play in the pursuit of economic and political independence but, in terms of having complete sovereignty that Cornell and Kalt (1998, 1990) discuss as a key to long term community development success, Fred, Betty and Davis are pessimistic that it will occur in the near future.

3) The Impact Ecotourism has on Cultural Knowledge and Learning

Aboriginal cultural knowledge is inextricably linked to the natural world. Through interviews and an excursion to a small island just off Lennox Island, that has cultural significance (medicinal plants, cultural and ceremonial sites) for the community members, I began to learn to what extent this knowledge has been

eroded among the Aboriginal people of Canada and specifically within the Lennox Island First Nation.

Effects of this cultural erosion include the near loss of the Mi'kmaq language, Elders no longer retaining specific cultural knowledge, and importing traditional cultural activities. While ecotourism cannot address all of these issues, it can play an important role by providing programming opportunities that reflect and reinforce the cultural identity of the community.

I. Perspectives on Cultural Knowledge

(i) Impacts of Catholicism

Exposure to another culture can have positive and/or negative effects on a community. The latter is the case for many Aboriginal communities around the world where the dominant society has imposed its language, religion and cultural values on an unassuming population. Indications from the literature, my field notes, and interview transcriptions illustrate that Catholicism, in particular, has greatly influenced the Lennox Island community and has contributed to the erosion of Mi'kmaq traditional knowledge and ceremonies.

In the communities I have worked with in the past, language is an important gauge to cultural health. Within the language, there are phrases that cannot be translated into English or have a much greater meaning than the translation. In the case of Lennox Island, Betty explains, "language is one of the main things of the culture and that was stopped. It was stopped when they went to Roman Catholicism" (August 26, 2004). Only a few remaining members on Lennox Island today, know and use the Mi'kmaq language. This can largely be

attributed to the teaching methods used by the government / Church run residential schools, and other programs designed to assimilate Aboriginal people into mainstream society. One individual, who is required to know the language for his Mi'kmaq drumming group, suggests that there are few people in the community he can turn to, "there are two people in the drum group that speak it, so that's who I go to and on top of that I go to elders, like [name withheld] and a couple of others to learn new words" (Davis, August 24, 2004). There is an effort to re-introduce the language in the school on the reserve but this is having limited success as there are so few Mi'kmaq speakers at home and the children only use it at school (Field Notes, August, 2004).

The introduction of Catholicism to the community also had an impact on traditional practices and cultural knowledge, "Beth's grandmother taught her the Catholic faith and this is how she and many of the older people grew up, rejecting their culture and converting to Catholicism" (Field Notes, July, 2004). This erosion likely occurred over many generations but Beth's comments suggest that the teachings of the Catholic faith are now being passed on to many of the children on reserve and the traditional culture is somewhat secondary. In another instance, an Elder is much blunter and describes what it is like if you do not subscribe to the faith of the Church. Even though John felt that there was room to practice both Aboriginal spirituality and Christianity he states, "don't condemn other people who don't practice it [Catholicism] and don't call them 'devils' and 'satin' and 'no good people'" (August 25, 2004). The above quote is referring to how the Church influenced individuals to believe that their traditional Mi'kmaq

practices were, as Warry (2000) suggests, pagan or the devil's work. From the above dialogue a better understanding is gained of how Christianity has played a role in turning Lennox Island community members against their own culture, affecting the language and, as will be seen, cultural knowledge. These issues are ubiquitous in First Nation communities across Canada and development strategies have sought to find solutions to these complex historical problems. On Lennox Island, the ecotourism development is providing opportunities to reconnect to cultural practices.

(ii) The state of cultural knowledge

Because of the influence of the church, very few Elders in the community have retained Mi'kmaq traditional knowledge. Carl describes the effect of this loss of knowledge, "Some elders don't know enough here, there may be a need to send them [the youth] to other Mi'kmaq communities" (August 23, 2004). When Elders in the community no longer retain their culture knowledge, the youth struggle with who they are and where they come from (Colton, 2000a).

One employee from the ecotourism project comments on how little he knows about his culture, "I try to get more into my community and culture. I know a little but not too much; I wish I knew more" (Mike, August 20, 2004). One might assume that those who are involved with the ecotourism project and interact with tourists would have a fairly substantial grounding in Mi'kmaq cultural knowledge. Another youth employee reluctantly reveals that, "[To] tell you the truth it [the culture] has not been passed on to me until I started working here" (Crystal, August 20, 2004). Hearing these comments from Crystal and Mike, employees

who deal with tourist on a daily basis, surprised me. An Elder explained to me the reality of many youth in the community, "What do those kids in that place know about culture. There is only one in that whole group that has been involved in the culture of Mi'kmaq people for a long period of time" (John, August 25, 2004). Based on Mike, Crystal and John's comments, my assumption that those hired by the ecotourism project would have a strong grasp of Lennox Island culture was misguided, and with few Elders retaining traditional Mi'kmaq knowledge, the loss of traditional cultural knowledge is a significant issue for the community.

(iii) Learning traditional knowledge

With few teachers of cultural knowledge in the community, the *traditionalists*, those who prescribe to practice and maintain the culture, have had to learn parts of the culture from others outside the community. One Elder describes where he has learned Mi'kmaq teachings, "I spent many, many hours talking to elders, some on [Lennox Island] but mostly off" (John, August 25, 2004). John's comment about where the cultural knowledge is currently learned assisted me in understanding a comment that Carl made in an earlier interview. Some of the cultural practices that occur on Lennox Island today have been imported from other First Nations from across the country. Carl states,

> The sweats today are sweats that are borrowed traditions from the west...A Pow Wow is not a Mi'kmaq tradition, it is a borrowed western tradition, now if they said they were going to have a Mawiomi...well that is a Mi'kmaq traditional gathering. (August 23, 2004)

According to Merv, these borrowed cultural traditions may not be detrimental for re-learning the Mi'kmaq culture,

> this is happening in lots of places, the more generic First Nations material is replacing indigenous Mi'kmaq culture...but it is not too late for people to learn and maybe it is a step that people have to go through, to get into the generalities before they get into the specifics of their own culture. (Merv, August 24, 2004)

Merv acknowledges that there is a loss of Mi'kmaq cultural knowledge but, if more 'general' Aboriginal traditional knowledge is introduced, perhaps there will be an interest in learning cultural knowledge specific to Lennox Island.

There are a small number of Elders in the community who still utilize and retain cultural knowledge, in particular those individuals who have held on to the language. Some of the traditionalists have had to go elsewhere to re-learn parts of their culture from other First Nation communities. This helps explain why there is the use of 'imported' cultural activities on Lennox Island.

(iv) Incorporating Elders into the ecotourism programming

Ecotourism has provided an avenue for cultural knowledge to be passed on to the younger generation with the assistance and teachings of knowledgeable Elders. Betty states that, "We always try to incorporate elders into our programs" (August 26, 2004). This comment refers to specific cultural presentations, like basket making and guided tours, where Elders are asked to lead the activity. During my time on Lennox Island, there were only a small number of Elders actually involved with the ecotourism project and ideas were being discussed of how to increase this participation. As Fred points out, it is not just about getting more Elder participation,

> if we can get more Elders employed through the program it will have a great impact but it is getting that established group of Elders that have the

> knowledge and are willing to be involved...and hopefully we can get more buy in from the community members and that is all going to give it credibility and it is going to help the program get better and better. (August 24, 2004)

Finding Elders who have strong traditional and cultural knowledge and who are interested and willing to share their knowledge with tourists is one goal of the project (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2002). Also, as Betty states, "it is not just for tourists, it is for us to" (August 26, 2004). Having knowledgeable Elders is an asset for the tourists but it is also one of the most valuable ways in which to teach the Lennox Island youth, involved in ecotourism, about their traditional culture. Ecotourism development has the potential to re-connect Elders and youth in this knowledge transfer that was once such an important part of Aboriginal existence.

Re-connecting Elders and youth through ecotourism programming is an effective way for knowledge to be transferred to those interested. An Elder explains how he approaches passing on knowledge to employees at the ecotourism center,

> when I do tours on the trail I always try to get one of the younger people to come with me to try and get them interested in at least some aspect of the trail...the most effective way I find, is one on one. (Carl, August 23, 2004)

The Elder went on to explain how he enjoyed informing the tourists of his culture but, also found that engaging youth from the community on a 'one to one basis' during the tour is an important way for youth to learn. This Elder felt that the stories told and the observations made would contribute to the youth's education of the cultural knowledge.

II. Cultural Commoditization

(i) Cultural knowledge not for sale

Both tourists and residents can walk down the 'Path of our Forefathers' at the Lennox Island Ecotourism development and read the stories posted along the trail. This information provides an excellent opportunity to learn about the history and culture of this First Nation people. Similarly, the information on the large bulletin boards in the cultural center has both general and personal information of individuals and the cultural knowledge of the community. It is important to recognize that disseminating both general and specific information must go through the proper community protocol. This protocol involves seeking permission from the family for use of the information. Betty summarizes the process, "Yes some information is just for the family, some information is open to the tourist... if we were doing a project on different families then, we would have to get their permission first" (August 26, 2004). Mike gives a specific example,

> We had to have permission for everything, if we take one of [name withheld] drums and put it up, we have to ask permission first, we can't just put it up, that is not respectful. (August 20, 2004)

Gaining permission from individuals to utilize cultural materials, cultural knowledge and stories is an essential component of the ecotourism project's ability to disseminate the community's cultural knowledge to visitors.

There are instances where the use of recording equipment is prohibited when cultural ceremonies are practiced in front of the tourist's gaze (Urry, 1990) because of fear that the cultural knowledge will be used in inappropriate ways.

John explains some of the meaning behind why cameras need to be turned off during his ceremonies,

> the Mi'kmaq traditional person, there are things that you do, you know, there is protocol. You don't do these ceremonial things in front of camera, you tell the camera to be shut down. One of the reporters said...you told us not to take pictures and shut our cameras off when you did the ceremonies. I said my ceremonies are sacred, the oldest ceremonies in the world and I have great respect for them and I don't want sacrilegious things done to them, to make them not be mine and cameras do that. (August 25, 2004)

Similar concerns have also been found in the literature (Burlo, 1996) where a cultural ceremony has been recorded by tourists, and then sold for profit; all outside of the community's control.

Determining whether cultural items can be sold depends on the intended use. Dallas, who has gained important cultural knowledge from his grandmother, states,

> I don't sell it, that is his traditional ways...I respect him for that so I just give him some because that is part of his spirituality. If you want it for a handicraft I can sell it to you for that but I wouldn't sell it for a [name withheld] ceremony, I'd give it. (August 25, 2004)

From Dallas' comment, one can see a definite distinction between a 'tourist handicraft' and an item for 'ceremonial use' and how the same material that is used for both is sold in one instance but not in another. The three examples provided above illustrate that not all cultural knowledge is for sale and each of the individuals interviewed made it very clear to me that respecting protocol was vital when sharing knowledge.

(ii) The sale of culture

Tourists are willing to spend money to learn about other cultures. The literature describes this process of exchange, money for cultural knowledge, as commoditization. There are both positive and negative consequences that occur from this process of exchange. Hinch and Butler (1996) suggest that commoditization of culture provides a symbiotic relationship between economic success and cultural survival. Dallas explains how he uses the knowledge he obtained from his grandmother to create a cultural product to sell to the tourists. He states, "My grandmother taught me...The way she taught me is the same way I am showing you...The tourists are pretty amazed at what I just showed you there" (August 25, 2004) and while I was interviewing him, two tourists came by and purchased items he had made.

In another instance, where ecotourism commoditizes the culture, tourists can choose to take a walk on the 'Path of our Forefathers' in which they can learn from interpretive panels or they can request a guided tour for an additional fee. One of the youth from the community, who is employed by the project, has taken an interest in medicinal plants and in addition to presenting the standard guided tour, he teaches tourists about the location and use of these plants. Merv explains,

> [name withheld] has about 6-8 pages of medicinal plants that he knows. He knows how to identify them and can show people out there [on the Path], it is a small thing but it is a really good start. (August 24, 2004)

This commoditization of culture is leading this particular individual to expand his local knowledge of medicinal plants. The benefits are two fold: one is that the

individual can earn an income from passing on this cultural knowledge, and the second is that the exchange may encourage more community members to learn and expand their own cultural knowledge.

III. Perspectives on Cross-Cultural Learning

(i) Cross-cultural learning

The leadership of the Lennox Island First Nation understands the importance of building bridges with its neighbours. One avenue for groups to learn about Mi'kmaq culture is through cross-cultural awareness workshops initiated by the ecotourism development strategy. There are workshops offered to various Federal and Provincial departments, local groups and schools. To better understand Mi'kmaq culture. John notes,

> cultural awareness can be the mainstay of that center during the winter months because there are all kinds of people willing to pay to come here for cultural awareness weekends (August 25, 2004).

He went on to explain that, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are two federal departments that have come to these workshops on a regular basis. Betty explains the types of activities one group will be experiencing in an upcoming cross-cultural workshop in the community, "For 3 days they will be learning the language, dancing, drumming, they will be having a feast, they will be getting a boat tour, just so many things in 3 days" (August 26, 2004). These workshops occur more frequently now that the ecotourism development is in full operation.

One of the key reasons tourists visit Aboriginal tourism destinations is to experience another culture. Below is an excerpt from an interview with Carl that

exemplifies the cross-cultural learning experiences that can be gained through the ecotourism program on Lennox Island,

> Now, I said, I want you to realize that as we enter the trail we are entering an area where everything around you is alive...it makes a big difference because they almost become in tune with what is going around them...The three ladies I had this weekend through the trail, and I had them stop not far from here and said I just want you to stop and listen, what do you hear? It is so quiet one says, I said but what do you hear, I don't hear anything another says, I said listen you should be able to hear something. I said, I can tell you are from the city because you can't hear anything it is too noisy. I said, stop and listen, what do you hear? They were just amazed because they started hearing little sounds...That was what the goal was, to produce a trail that is not only a walking trail but a living trail, a living trail in the sense that this is what our ancestors, our grandmothers, grandfathers, great grandmothers, great grandfathers lived but why did they live that life and how did they sustain themselves in that life, this is what this trail is all about. All the things around here that we take for granted they didn't, they had to listen, they had to watch, they had to see, why, in order to survive. They didn't have a clock to tell them the time, they didn't have the weatherman to tell them the weather, they had to know just by watching, seeing and looking. (August 25, 2004)

Carl's explanation of this to me on the trail was cross-cultural learning in action.

(ii) Building cross-cultural relationships with neighbours

It has become more common to see school age children from the surrounding communities visit and be part of Mi'kmaq cultural activities. The ecotourism project has provided excellent opportunities for school groups to participate and learn about the culture and Prilla suggests that the children enjoy the experience,

> The school kids come here, they see that people don't live in wigwams, they visit, they see the homes, they bring busloads of kids...now the schools they just want them to come here. The kids love it they want to be part of it, they want to do the drumming. (August 24, 2004)

The children are offered the chance to try some Mi'kmaq drumming and receive a tour of the ecotourism complex and cultural center and, depending on the time of year, can walk on the 'Path of our Forefathers'. This cross-cultural experience is helping to break down stereotypes and barriers. Prilla states, "we have come a long way" (August 24, 2004) referring to the not-so-distant past when some people uttered racial comments towards the people of Lennox Island. The ecotourism program has assisted in bringing the communities together so that both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people can learn about each other.

In summary, offering cultural experiences is one way of motivating tourists to visit Aboriginal communities. To better understand cultural knowledge and learning it, was important to look first at the current state of cultural knowledge. As seen on Lennox Island, there has been an erosion of culture knowledge, at least partially, due to exposure to Christianity and government policies. The knowledge is still available but is much more difficult to discover and not necessarily in the community. Ecotourism is a catalyst for supporting cultural knowledge and, through the sale of cultural products, has reinforced the importance of this knowledge. Cross-cultural knowledge exchange is also extremely beneficial for Lennox Island in that it helps break down barriers and stereotypes. Cultural knowledge is a key factor of the ecotourism development

and is recognized by the Lennox Island First Nation as an important piece in the community development puzzle.

4) Community Wellness

During my research on Lennox Island, I toured the community health center. This modern facility hosts a visiting doctor twice per week, a full-time nurse, and a wellness team that works primarily on health promotion and prevention. The center is equipped with a full range of services from treatment to follow-up and deals with physical health, emotional and cultural healing, alcohol and drug counseling. It also has a staff member dedicated to recreation programming. The results suggest that ecotourism development plays a role in impacting community wellness in many dimensions.

Although the ecotourism initiative did not intentionally plan to impact wellness, there are linkages that ecotourism contributes to building and strengthening community relationships. Further to this, there are indications that the cultural identity in the community is being re-established and a cultural rule is being followed. Having a trail that is accessible to the community is also contributing to the physical well-being of community members.

I. Perspectives on Relationships and Individual Empowerment

(i) Strengthening community relationships

Community relationships, in particular between families, are crucial in how a community functions. In two of the Vancouver Island Aboriginal communities I worked with, the division between families created tension in the community that could, in some cases, paralyze the day-to-day life of the community. When

issues were not effectively resolved, divisions arose and community relationships were affected. As Tina describes, strengthening community relationships is a vital component in community wellness:

> when you look at the health of the community, the social connections are key. Probably, that should be one of the biggest success indicators right there. I think that will tell you whether your community is healthy or not, everything else will come from that one. I think they are good here. (August 26, 2004)

As a member of the health center, Tina understands the value of positive relationships within the community. She attributes these positive, healthy relationships to two main factors:

- Economic opportunities and
- The emphasis the community puts on social programs.

These factors are fostering new and healthy relationships among individuals and families on Lennox Island.

Tina runs a number of programs from the health clinic and in one particular program, she uses the ecotourism infrastructure. Tina utilizes the 'Path of our Forefathers' for an outing and describes the experience,

> We all [children/parents] walked to the trail and had a special ceremony, honouring ourselves and the blueberry crop and we did the drumming and the singing and the kids all picked blueberries...[name with held] an elder presented a blueberry cake and she talked about how she made it and passed it out to all the people and then we wrote a book about it ...it was a great thing culturally, we did it in a talking circle, we had a stick and we passed the stick and each one took a turn and just kept adding to the story. (August 26, 2004)

Different generations were able to gather on the Path and, by utilizing culturally appropriate methods, produced a book about the blueberry crop on Lennox Island. The availability of the Path to the community allows for these types of programming opportunities, which can assist in the process of building strong, supportive relationships.

Another area where ecotourism can assist in developing stronger community relationships is through the hosting of cultural events. Hosting a Pow Wow in an Aboriginal community is a way of demonstrating to other First Nations ones cultural heritage and pride. With the Lennox Island ecotourism development directly responsible for the birth of drumming and dance groups, the Pow Wow is now an avenue to exhibit the community's cultural status to other First Nations from around North America. Tourists are invited to witness the cultural singing and dancing and the community members work together to host the gathering. Sue proudly describes the event,

> before we never had Pow Wows here on Lennox Island and this year was our 4th annual...seemed to be a very good success...they are growing. (August 22, 2004)

The ecotourism project has supported the establishment of drumming and dance groups in the community by providing opportunities for these groups to perform for tourists. The project also advertises the Pow Wow in travel guides that visitors to Prince Edward Island can obtain. Many of the community members that I spoke with suggested that the Pow Wow is something that they 'look forward to each year because it gets many in the community involved' (Field Notes, August 2004). Tina's interest in utilizing the ecotourism trail for bringing together multi-

generations and, Lennox Island gaining status by hosting a Pow Wow, contribute to fostering unity among community members and has the potential of strengthening relationships on Lennox Island that are important to community wellness.

(ii) Re-establishing cultural identity and building community pride

Individual empowerment and a strong sense of identity are difficult to measure but have important implications for wellness as described by Warry (2000). Being part of a group that is performing the traditional songs and dances of one's ancestors can create a sense of cultural identity as described by Betty, "since there has been drumming, dancing and more [cultural] knowledge, I think there is a lot more pride of who we are as Mi'kmaq people" (August 26, 2004). Sue is also beginning to see cultural pride within the community and states, "There is a lot of pride here, there is pride when people walk around with their regalia or doing drumming, singing and dancing like, you see the pride in them" (August 22, 2004). The comments from Betty and Sue illustrate that there is now more pride within individuals on Lennox Island and this is exhibited when there are opportunities to display their own cultural identity. With tourists now coming from around the world to see Mi'kmaq and Lennox Island culture, community members are showing pride in their identity

Tourists are coming to Lennox Island and learning about the local culture. They are leaving the community with words of praise as can be seen by the comments that are recorded in the guest book of the ecotourism complex, the survey's that were conducted by the program this past summer, and the

comments individual employees receive while conducting guided tours. Tina suggests that the time is right to hear these comments,

> we have skills to offer to the general public...you give to one another so much in a small community and after awhile you are like family and you are not necessarily noticed. People get so comfortable with one another that they don't always see the gifts or no longer comment on those gifts that they see in somebody, where outsiders [tourists] will. I think it is a great time to bring other people into the community and I think it will be a real compliment. (August 26, 2004)

If tourists continue to give positive feedback about what the community and individuals have to offer, the community will truly begin to believe that there is something special to be proud of again. Prilla describes a time when things were very different,

> where as before you had to be careful because if you were proud of something [your culture] and somebody was just knocking it down, the kids did not know why they should be proud...so they would say don't talk about that [your culture] because they will laugh at you, so we have come a long way. (Prilla, August 24, 2004)

The effects on community cultural pride and pride within individuals will continue to be reinforced as more tourists comment positively on their visit to Lennox Island. As Prilla describes, at one time there was not much to be proud of, but as a stronger cultural identity (Warry, 2000) continues to build, in part through ecotourism, the results will have important positive impacts on community wellness.

Ecotourism has created employment opportunities for youth on Lennox Island. However these jobs offer more than financial reward as they have served

to support capacity building which has in turn impacted community wellness. For example the cultural center offers a guided tour in which an employee will explain the various aspects of Mi'kmaq culture. Crystal states,

> I do have a lot of pride when I am doing the tours. I am confident in myself because I know I am telling them the information in the right way and not leaving anything out. (Crystal, August 20, 2004)

Crystal's job is to reveal the world of Mi'kmaq culture to visitors. Her comments illustrate how presenting the culture can empower an individual, instill self confidence, and create a sense of individual pride. This form of empowerment is what Bell (1999a) and Poonwassie and Charter (2001) describe as a key element in Aboriginal community development. Building a cultural identity (Warry, 2000) and strengthening community relationships (Bell, 1999a) are important concepts discussed in the literature and are related to the overall wellness of the community. Ecotourism on Lennox Island can impact wellness through such activities as drum and dance performances and Pow Wows. Ecotourism employment and cultural activities contribute to overall community wellness on Lennox Island.

II. Perceptions on Important Community Wellness Issues

(i) Substance abuse and cultural rules

It is difficult to deal with alcohol and drug problems in any community. As I learned through interviewing community members, there are ways culture can provide youth with a choice. Betty describes how, "I find that when they are into the traditional drumming and stuff, they stay away from the drugs and alcohol more because they have to" (August 26, 2004). The cultural rule, as I understood

it, was that if you are using alcohol or drugs, then you are forbidden to participate in the cultural ceremonies or drumming group. Further investigation into the subject revealed a rule that was being enforced. The cultural rule provides a distinct choice as explained to me by an Elder, "like I've had a beer tonight, if somebody asked me to do a sweet grass ceremony tomorrow I can't. Forty-eight hours, but for me it, I usually stick with seventy-two" (John, August 25, 2004). Although there is no formal 'Band law' that states one cannot 'drink and drum', the enforcement of this law is practiced and was demonstrated, in part, through ecotourism activities.

Knowing that culture is an avenue to deal with alcohol and drugs, I went on to learn what role the ecotourism project has played in supporting the reduction of substance usage. I found first that, "through ecotourism it has got the drum group into a lot of gigs in letting people see our native culture" (Davis, August 24, 2004). With more opportunities this past summer for the drumming group, I found that the enforcement of the cultural rule was being applied,

> They choose alcohol over the drum...I use it for helping the kids stay away from drugs and alcohol and we wouldn't want it around. So when they are sober it is an open door policy but if they are using it don't come around. (Davis, August 24, 2004)

Davis is referring to an individual who I thought was part of the drum group but was not participating in particular drumming event that I witnessed. If any member of the group is believed to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they are not allowed to participate and Davis is the one who enforces the rule. With the ecotourism project providing the drum group with more opportunities to

perform in front of an audience, there are choices that community members have to make. As these cultural activities grow, this community rule has the potential to play a greater role in providing a solution to what many in the community voiced as a concern - drugs and alcohol. In terms of community wellness, the reduction of the use of alcohol and drugs, by the youth in particular, in the community would have many positive benefits.

(ii) Community use of the trail

There are a number of obvious physical health benefits that the ecotourism development can be directly linked to, particularly with trail use. While interviewing Carl on the trail, another community member, who was walking her dog, stopped by to speak with us. After the community member moved on, Carl said,

> Prime example, the reason she was out walking, she knows if she stays at home she starts drinking. She has sugar diabetes and high blood pressure but if she walks the trails her sugar goes down, her high blood pressure goes down and she doesn't drink. So that is a choice she makes...she is walking the area where she used to walk as a kid...it is the same place but a different time. (August 23, 2004)

A conscious choice being made by this community member to exercise on the 'Path of our Forefathers' is a positive development in terms of health and overall wellness in the community.

Activities such as walking on the trail have grown significantly since the Path was completed. Late summer and early fall are very active times for trail use by the community as Carl indicates,

> first of all they are walking for their own health, but also they are learning and discovering that there is actually beauty in these trails. I have had people come up to me and say I never dreamed that the trail walk would be so fulfilling, especially in the fall. (August 23, 2004)

Carl suggests that individuals are utilizing infrastructure put in place by the ecotourism development and that this is contributing to the physical health of community members. When a well built and maintained trail is constructed, it attracts local residents. In reviewing my field notes, I talk about going for a run and passing through many distinct areas on the Path that makes for an interesting trek and,

> I saw two younger people riding their bikes on the trail. Then I came across an older community member walking the path on her own, the mosquitoes did not seem to bother her. (Field Notes, July, 2004)

On many occasions after the tourists had gone for the day, I would go out for a run and see community members using the trail. Ultimately, it comes down to choices by individuals but, if the ecotourism project can play a role by providing usable facilities that contribute to better health of individuals, it is certainly a positive benefit in terms of community wellness.

Ecotourism development has also been a catalyst for a number of events in the community. One such event involves the 'Barney Francis and Michael Thomas Memorial Run' on the Path. For the past two years, the ecotourism centre has sponsored the memorial run. From my field notes, Davis describes the event, "you can participate in either a 10km run, 5km walk, or a 3km run. We send it to the 'Road Runners' race magazine and then it is part of a circuit that

they promote for us" (Field Notes, August, 2004). Davis indicated that the run is open to all, community and visitors alike, and there are different age categories to compete in. Events such as the memorial run and the mini-triathlon during the St. Anne's Sunday, which also uses the trail, are important in encouraging community members to participate in being physically active. It is hoped that the memorial run will inspire some of the community youth to follow in the footsteps of the two individuals the run is named after (Field Notes, July, 2004).

Community wellness is based on the physical and emotional health of the community and the individuals within. Potential ways in which ecotourism can assist in enhancing community wellness are:

- The physical health benefits members gain by utilizing the trail
- The potential to reduce substance abuse through a cultural rule
- Building a stronger cultural identity and creating individual pride
- Creating strong, supportive relationships within the community

These unforeseen impacts contribute positively to overall community development.

5) Environmental Stewardship

There were strong indications that an informal environmental stewardship philosophy exists on Lennox Island. This observation is based on prolonged observation, the use of field notes, and conducting in-depth interviews. Ecotourism has been a catalyst for understanding and putting into practice this philosophy since its inception. The stewardship philosophy is not only part of the ecotourism development but is a key component in choosing future development initiatives on Lennox Island.

I. Stewardship as a Part of Community Development

(i) A set of guiding principles for community development

Before the ecotourism project broke ground, a community planning process was undertaken to determine community interests. From this process, a ten-year strategic plan was compiled. Included within the plan are a number of guiding principles for the ecotourism project. The first guiding principle states to, "protect and strengthen ecological integrity" (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2002, 8). This sets the foundation for how the ecotourism development should proceed. Prilla indicates that,

> As long as it [any development on Lennox Island] is staying culturally aware and ecologically responsible, people are interested...The guiding principles found in the 10-Year Strategic Plan are already part of the Band's overall development philosophy. (August 24, 2004)

As part of the Lennox Island administration, Prilla suggests the guiding principles from the ecotourism strategic plan apply to all other development projects.

I accompanied a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation news reporter and a community member, Fred, to learn more about Lennox Island's wind generation test sight and possible future development projects. Fred explained the natural progression that is occurring,

> Ecotourism has led to the wind power development proposal and it has led to looking at this integrated plan of the bay. In many ways it has laid those guiding principles down for development that will happen here in the future. (Fred, August 24, 2004)

There were discussions about developing an overall energy strategy for the community as well as an integrated plan for Malpeque Bay. The notion of

environmental stewardship and respect are evident in the community planning that is taking place. The Ecotourism development has facilitated the creation of an environmental stewardship philosophy that has produced guiding principles for future community development projects.

(ii) A glimpse into the stewardship philosophy and its practice

One of the key concepts of the environmental stewardship philosophy is that of respect for the natural environment. Betty provides a small glimpse into this and states, "Respecting each other, respecting the earth, respecting things you take from the earth, like if you take a clam shell you put tobacco down" (August 26, 2004). This philosophy was discussed in the literature in various forms (Reimer, 2004; MacGregor, 1993) but, more importantly, it is how these concepts are currently being practiced in the community that is important.

Since the inception of the ecotourism development, it has been demonstrated in various ways how the guiding principles have directed development. The guiding principles, which are a reflection of the community's values, are used as a basis to determine which projects proceed on Lennox Island. Merv illustrates this by stating,

> there was that [name withheld] idea that was not environmentally sustainable a couple of years ago that somebody reviewed and if the ecotourism project did not exist that project may have gone ahead. So I think it is a philosophy that is leading its way into thinking about projects. (August 24, 2004)

By definition, ecotourism protects natural areas from unsustainable development and, based on Merv's comments above, the ecotourism guiding principles allow

for the leadership to stop community development projects that potentially threaten the natural surroundings of Lennox Island.

Ecotourism development on Lennox Island follows these guiding principles. For example, a conscious decision was made to protect the medicinal plants and unique species when the 'Path of our Forefathers' was created. This started in the planning stages as described by Carl, "First of all before the trails were built even before any of the wood cutting was started, we brought in botanists" (August 23, 2004). From John's perspective, the decision to bring in a botanist was imperative and he described the issue this way,

> Dandelion root, wild rose root, horse tail...blueberry, juniper bark, larch and it is right there, you are walking over it...that was one of the reasons why when there was talk about doing the trails, the Island Nature Trust was brought in to go through the whole thing. From this that is why you got the interpretive signs down there telling you what things are. (John, August 25, 2004)

Pride of ownership was clearly evident when speaking with these two interviewees about the construction of the trail and how the important species had been identified and protected for both visitors and the community to enjoy and learn from.

During the course of my research, I assisted the maintenance crew in clearing trees from near the path. I learned that, if a dead tree was standing close to the trail but leaning in the opposite direction, it was not to be cut down. It was explained to me that, "to cut down a tree unnecessarily could affect other species that were of significance to the community" (Field Notes, August, 2004). By observing the daily activities of the community, the notion of 'respect' for the

natural world appeared to come in many forms. I noted a number of examples in my field notes including:

- 1,200 black ash tree seedlings planted to re-establish culturally significant species,
- A green-bin recycling program going on for the past four years,
- One R-2000 house built and another being constructed in the community,
- Test station measuring the potential for a wind power generation,
- The concept of an energy plan for the community to reduce power consumption,
- Idea of a bio-sciences center and detailed planning for Malpeque Bay.

These observations, along with the ecotourism project, suggest to me that environmental stewardship is a major component of community development on Lennox Island.

C. Conclusion

From a broad perspective, using Bell's four C's to conceptualize community development on Lennox Island has allowed for consideration of how ecotourism has impacted community development. The results from data gathered reveal that there are a number of areas that ecotourism can impact within the community that are not necessarily related to economic development but are described in the literature as being important to overall community development . Also, there are specific areas of impact that are unique to Lennox Island which are not described in the literature.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A. Introduction

Although tourism can benefit Aboriginal communities in various dimensions (Notzke, 1999; Zeppel 1998a; Butler & Hinch, 1996), there has been little formal research that relates ecotourism development to community development. When the Lennox Island First Nation decided to pursue ecotourism there were outcomes that were foreseen, and in addition, important impacts that were not considered or planned. Conceptualizing community development through the use of the modified Four C's (seen in Table 1) has uncovered how ecotourism can contribute to a wider range of factors other than those typically found in the tourism literature. These factors are at times described in the Aboriginal community development literature as being important contributions to meaningful and sustainable community development. The discussion below links the results of this research study with the tourism and Aboriginal community development literature and attempts to synthesis the community development impacts of ecotourism on Lennox Island.

B. Discussion

In 1999, the Lennox Island First Nation chose ecotourism as a form of community development. "With a firm grounding in community-based planning" (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000, 2) the Lennox Island Ecotourism Ten Year Strategic Plan outlined a path for development that was designed to produce a

sustainable economic opportunity. The members and leadership made it clear through community discussions that if the project was to proceed they required ecotourism to be:

- Realistic; project needed to build on the strengths of the community
- Practical; project needed to proceed at a pace and scale consistent with the people and resources available in the community and,
- Tangible; project needed to produce results such as jobs and other benefits early on to demonstrate to the community what was possible

(MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000)

With the literature suggesting that Aboriginal communities around the world are choosing tourism as a form of community development (Notzke, 1999; Zeppel, 1998; Hinch & Butler, 1996) the Lennox Island First Nation joins the ranks as it works towards an ecotourism project that is grounded in the culture, provides employment opportunities and is controlled locally (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000).

Five years into the Ecotourism initiative and with a Strategic Plan in place, this research study revealed outcomes that were not necessarily anticipated at the inception of the project. Utilizing a modified form of Bell's (1999a) Four C's, the overall impact of the Lennox Island Ecotourism project on community development is summarized in Table 5. An addition to Table 5, not seen in the earlier version of the modified Four C's, is a concept important to Lennox Island community development. As the foundation to the ecotourism initiative, there is a notion that an Environmental Stewardship Philosophy exists that influences other community development projects on Lennox Island. This philosophy is discussed in a later section.

Table 5: Impact of Lennox Island Ecotourism on Community Development

Community Empowerment

- Fair and open decision making process
- Community control over the ecotourism development
- Working towards independence by creating economically viable community development projects
- Federal government still has major influence and control over community through the Indian Act
- Little control over own destiny
- Strong leadership with open communication with membership

Community Economic Development

- Increased employment
- Build capacity for business and investment on reserve
- Mixture of public and private jobs
- Public jobs are low paying and seasonal
- Training jobs
- Bringing in 'new money' from outside sources (tourists)
- Building on community strengths
- Founded on sound economic principles
- Ecotourism has a significant role to play in the success of economy

Lennox Island Ecotourism

Community Wellness

- Building stronger community relationships through programs and activities for community members
- Developing a sense of pride while presenting culture to tourists
- Developing pride because being appreciated by outsiders (tourists)
- Enforcing cultural rules related to drugs and alcohol
- Increasing the number of cultural performance groups in the community
- Becoming more physically active from use of the trail by community members
- Hosting events which encourage outdoor physical activity

Community Learning

- Re-learning the culture
- Learning traditions from other Aboriginal communities
- Involving knowledgeable Elders
- Elders passing on knowledge to the youth
- The commoditization encourages the learning of traditional cultural knowledge and practices
- Learning protocol
- Individual empowerment through acquiring appropriate knowledge and skills
- Cross cultural learning for tourists and neighbours
- Cultural awareness activities for outside groups

FOUNDATION

Environmental Stewardship Philosophy

- Philosophy based on respect for the natural world
- Guiding principles direct community development projects
- Projects may not be approved if they are not in line with philosophy
- The philosophy is practiced (e.g. construction of the Path of our Forefathers)
- Philosophy is guide to future community development projects

The following discussion examines the broad impact ecotourism has on community development as it relates to the current literature and builds from this to expand the current body of knowledge.

I. Community Economic Development

There is little doubt that tourism can play a significant role in the economic development aspirations of a community. In reviewing the tourism literature, there are many examples of the types of economic benefits tourism can have. These benefits range from generating revenue and providing jobs to developing capacity (Colton, 2000a, Milne et al., 1995; Parker, 1993). According to Hinch and Butler (1996), "Western-based economic rationale underlies much of the argument to use tourism as a mechanism for finding solutions to the challenges facing indigenous people" (5) and this has been the case on Lennox Island. But, as Altman (1989) suggests, tourism will not be the instant panacea to all of a community's economic problems. Ross and Wall (1999) indicate that ecotourism can be used to diversify a community's economy and should not be viewed in isolation.

Conversely, the Aboriginal community development literature reveals important components that are needed to sustain community economic development initiatives within a First Nation community. Through ten years of the Harvard project, Cornell and Kalt (1998, 1990) reveal that there are two common types of economic development paths Aboriginal communities follow. The first is the 'jobs and income' approach, which I became very familiar with in my work with First Nations on Vancouver Island. The second approach is 'nation-building'

and will be discussed further in the empowerment section. According to Cornell and Kalt's (1998) research the piecemeal attempts at the 'jobs and income' approach failed time and time again. Both Elias (1991) and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) discuss how Aboriginal groups have been calling for a more comprehensive approach to community development than the federal government's economic initiatives and programs have been able to provide. Anderson (1995) emphasizes, First Nations expect economic development projects within their communities to be grounded in traditional values and more in line with their traditional way of doing things. First Nations know their limits in terms of adapting to Canadian society and "They will select among innovations and their own traditions to devise strategies and tactics for economic, political, and cultural development" (Elias, 1991, 35). Although the Lennox Island First Nation does not have full sovereignty, which Cornell and Kalt (1998) insist is needed for there to be the 'nation building approach', it does have a number of important elements described in the Aboriginal community development literature as being required for having success at developing economically.

Based on the results of this research project, the community economic development impacts from ecotourism, as summarized in Table 5, are similar to impacts found elsewhere in the literature. The Community Economic Development quadrant in Table 5 details the most obvious tangible benefits that the community members observe, in particular the increase in the number of jobs for youth and Elders. Merv provides an example of how the number of jobs have

increased, "we figured about 3 years ago there was 20-25 people working seasonally in tourism on Lennox Island, now there is about 45" (August 24, 2004). Another community member indicates that ecotourism, "fits very well...I think if they build the way they are going now, it may out rival the major employer here on the Island" (Carl, August 23, 2004).

Although the jobs are only seasonal, and not well paid, they do serve an important purpose in the community. The jobs not only provide a chance to learn skill sets important for future employment but also, can assist in building capacity and self-worth within individuals and ultimately the community. Building capacity on Lennox Island was a goal outlined in the Strategic Plan (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000) and viewed by others in the literature (Simpson et al., 2003; Colton, 2000a; Eade, 2000) as essential elements for community development.

The ecotourism project is being built on sound economic principles and from Fred's perspective,

> they are not being set up to make people feel good they are being set up to make money ultimately. There are things like the culture that are definitely as important but basically, the foremost criteria is that a project does not break the Band and actually helps provide more services to the members through profitability. (August 24, 2004)

The research indicates that ecotourism is also being built on another important community strength, the culture, and that consideration for the culture has been incorporated into every aspect of the initiative. Sound economic principles, and the inclusion of Lennox Island culture, has created an environment that encourages community members to participate in the project. Some of this participation comes in the form of private entrepreneurship, as demonstrated with

the two new businesses that started in 2004 in the ecotourism complex. Creating a favorable environment for community members to invest in is an important concept in developing and sustaining the local economy (Cornell & Kalt, 1990; Anderson, 1995).

Many Lennox Island members interviewed believed that ecotourism has a significant role to play in the economic development of the community. But as Fred indicates, "I think in some ways, now that [the] ecotourism side of things has been realized, it is also important that you don't want to have all your eggs in one basket" (August 24, 2004). Ecotourism will not solve all the economic issues on the Island but has the ability to help build a more diversified economy (Ross & Wall, 1999) that will assist in sustaining a solid economic future on the Island. Sustainable community development relies on a host of variables including, in the case of Lennox Island, the economic success of ecotourism. The Lennox Island First Nation understands the economic impacts that ecotourism provides and is charting a course toward future sustainable economic development opportunities.

II. Community Empowerment

Community empowerment as described earlier in the modified Four C's considers governance, how much control the community has over projects, and how much sovereignty the community has in controlling its own destiny. The tourism literature, of interest to this research study, focuses mainly on who is in control of the land/resources and the tourism project (Colton, 2000a; Zeppel 1998a). In Colton's research he indicates that, "Of greater significance to the

ecotourism development and its relationship to indigenous people, however, is the issue of control" (2000a, 40). Aboriginal communities with greater control over tourism development can determine which parts of their culture are presented, and who and how many can have access to specific sites (Zeppel, 1998a). Hinch (1995) brings out an extremely important point related to control that is also reflected in the Lennox Island case. He states that, "tourism development is not something that happens to communities but rather it is something that happens with them" (126). Since the Lennox Island First Nation is controlling the ecotourism project, the development is happening 'with' the community rather than 'to' them.

Cornell and Kalt's (1998) research conducted in the United States indicates that sovereignty is the "practical assertion by tribes of their right and capacity to govern themselves" (210) and is a precondition for Aboriginal development. He cautions that the 'nation-building' approach does not ensure the community of economic success but "it vastly improves the chances that economic development will take root and be sustainable" (193). Elias (1991) is more pessimistic in what First Nations across Canada will be able to achieve through the empowerment debate,

> Sovereignty seems to be out of the question and even constitutional reconstruction has found little favour...It seems that federal and provincial governments see devolution and legislated change as the pinnacle of self-government rather than recognition of an inherent aboriginal right to self-government. (132-133)

With the constraints imposed by governments, the lofty goals of development that Aboriginal communities have been calling for (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996) will be very difficult to achieve.

On Lennox Island, a transparent decision-making process that is at arms length from politics has been tested through the ecotourism initiative. Cornell and Kalt (1998, 1990) suggest that is one of the pieces needed for long-term, successful community development. This particular decision-making process was utilized to decide which business initiative would be selected to open in the ecotourism complex. The process was perceived to be fair and will likely be considered when similar decisions need to be made. The research results also indicate that community members being "thorns in the side" (Prilla, August 24, 2004) of the leadership is one important way of keeping the Chief and Council 'in check'. Having an open and transparent decision-making process and the ability to keep the leadership 'in check' allows the community to have a sense of control over the ecotourism project on Lennox Island.

Control is outlined in the Strategic Plan where community members and the leadership insisted that, "the pace and scale [of the ecotourism development] should be such that the community would retain control" (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000, 8). As seen in the literature, one key reason Aboriginal groups have chosen ecotourism is because of the ability to retain control over the project. Lennox Island, through proper protocol, have control over what parts of the culture are presented to tourist. An ecotourism employee states, "some of the information is just for the family, some information is open to the tourist...if we

were doing a project on different families then, we would have to get their permission" (Betty, August 26, 2004). From Betty's comment, it can be seen that the proper protocol is simply asking permission from the family who owns the information. The interview results indicated that protocol is being re-enforced by the ecotourism initiative, which assists in controlling what cultural knowledge tourists have access to.

Based on the data gathered the interview results do not demonstrate the same sense of control when the issue of sovereignty or self-determination was discussed. Many in the community feel that the federal government still has a major influence over Lennox Island's destiny. Trying to negotiate with the government of Canada is seen as a futile exercise, as described by Prilla,

> they [federal government] say how much you are going to get. Like people say you are going to negotiate with them for this and that. You might negotiate a garbage contract or some little thing but they already have in their mind a bottom line. I don't call that negotiating, if you don't have any power how the hell do you negotiate...they are not going to change their bottom line. (August 24, 2004)

Elias' (1991) research acknowledges the struggles that Prilla and other First Nations have when negotiating with the government, and indicates there is a strong need for change if community development is going to succeed in Aboriginal societies. Cornell and Kalt (1998, 1990) suggest sovereignty, along with other key elements, is the foundation to successful, long-term community development. The lack of sovereignty or self-determination is a fundamental issue that Aboriginal communities continue to fight for on the road to more meaningful and sustained community development.

III. Community Learning

Within the tourism literature there are a range of views on how culture, and how the learning of culture, has been impacted by tourism development. Harris and Wearing (1999) describe an experiential style of learning, traditionally important to Aboriginal communities, as being one method by which cultural knowledge can be passed on to youth. Other authors such as Medina (2003), Sofield (2002) and Snow (2000) discuss the value tourism has had in preserving, revitalizing or even re-learning traditional cultures. For instance, Medina offers an example of a Mayan community that has lost its culture and states, "As villagers who work in tourism have attempted to acquire new, yet ancient, knowledge, they have drawn heavily on new channels provided by Mayanist academics" (362). Those Aboriginal societies that have completely lost their culture have a long, arduous journey of revival. Communities like Lennox Island whose culture has been eroded but not lost, are finding ways of re-learning this knowledge. As seen from Hiwasaki (2000) and, King and Stewart's (1996) research, through processes such as commoditization, a culture can be reinvigorated. Many authors discuss impacts of commoditization (Medina, 2002; Snow & Wheeler, 2000; Burlo, 1996; King & Stewart, 1996) and one theme that continues to emerge is the significance of retaining community control.

Bell (1999a) views the entire community as a classroom and states "there can be no true community development without community learning" (17). Building 'capacity' within individuals, and collectively in the community, is seen as fundamental for any form of community development to occur. Capacity building

is discussed in many different forms (Simpson, 2005; Simpson et al., 2003; Colton, 2000a; Eade, 2000) and for the purposes of this research study, is discussed in Table 5 under the Community Economic Development heading. Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2002) approach learning from a slightly different perspective and discuss community development as needing to be grounded in local knowledge and occurs at a pace that the community learns and grows from. In Geogo and Watson-Gegeo's (2002) research the notion that community development is occurring 'with' the community and not 'to' a community is an important lesson.

The impact ecotourism has had on Community Learning on Lennox Island is summarized in Table 5. The erosion of cultural knowledge has occurred over centuries, at least in part due to government policies and the influence of the Catholic Church. Ecotourism is contributing to the (re)-learning of cultural knowledge and promoting traditional ways of learning. Elders are passing on this knowledge through ecotourism programming where youth employees are encouraged to assist the Elders on guided tours. From this experience, the youth are able to observe and listen to what is being said. This experiential style of learning (Harris & Wearing, 1999) is a culturally appropriate method of transferring knowledge and is an important avenue for community youth to learn.

The Lennox Island community members have control over their own cultural knowledge and determine what is presented and sold to tourists. It was made clear from the interview results that not all cultural knowledge is for sale. When it is sold, proper protocol, similar to that described in Burlo's (1996)

research, must be followed. The youth employed by the ecotourism initiative are learning traditional knowledge through the commoditization process when Elders present cultural knowledge to tourists. As "more and more tourists are demanding that type of knowledge and experience when they visit Lennox Island" (Carl, August 23, 2004) the value of this knowledge increases. Youth who take an interest in learning traditional knowledge such as traditional medicines, will become very busy during the tourist season. Ensuring the transfer of cultural knowledge to the youth and commoditizing certain aspects of the culture may be what is required to revitalize the culture on Lennox Island to a level that allows it to once again flourish.

Cross-cultural programs/workshops are an important aspect of the ecotourism project's operations and are an attempt to educate tourists, local communities, and the federal/provincial governments about the Lennox Island community and Mi'kmaq culture. These workshops have had a positive impact on relationships between the community and its neighbours. Carl describes how the Native foods' restaurant in the ecotourism complex is attracting visitors from outside the community,

> there is an oyster guy over here [points across the bay], he is very quiet doesn't say boo to anyone, very cranky looking all the time so nobody approaches him. He has been in the restaurant three times, once with his wife and the other times with clients...the food, the atmosphere, the service that is why he brought them over here and he said 'I will come back soon with more'. (August 23, 2004)

The potential benefits from fostering this relationship with the oyster fisherman is "great" in Carl's eyes because "he may now start buying diesel for his boats at

the fuel dock" (August 23, 2004) on reserve. If the relationship continues to grow, the fisherman may even decide to hire a Lennox Island community member to work with his crew on the oyster lease. This is one example of how ecotourism is building cross-cultural relationships outside the Lennox Island community. If the leadership decides that cross-cultural relationships are important, ecotourism can play a greater role in planning for and developing quality, cross-cultural programs that target specific groups.

IV. Community Wellness

The tourism literature does not directly link the impacts of ecotourism and community wellness. For example, Medina (2003) discusses the Myan cultural identity, Parker (1993) describes tourisms ability to reflect pride within Aboriginal communities and Fennel (2002) describes the potential psychological and sociological benefits of ecotourism, but there is little research from the tourism perspective on community wellness. The Aboriginal community development literature (Poonwassie & Charter, 2001; Warry, 2000; Wyrostok & Paulson, 2000) provides some insight into elements of wellness that are important to overall community development but are not related to tourism development. The results from this research study indicate that there are important links between ecotourism and community wellness on Lennox Island.

One example of where the ecotourism infrastructure is directly impacting wellness is that of the 'Path of Our Forefathers'. The construction of a well designed quality trail is enticing some community members to become more physically active, which is an unforeseen benefit that positively impacts

community wellness. In another instance, the ecotourism infrastructure has impacted wellness by providing the Lennox Island Health Center a location to deliver part of its program, aimed at promoting healthy community relationships. The use of the trail has allowed for intergenerational and cultural experiences that assist in building supportive relationships, which Tina (August 26, 2004) and Bell (1999a) suggests is an important component of community development.

Ecotourism has also contributed directly to community wellness through building what Warry (2000) describes as cultural esteem or a cultural identity. The results in Table 5 indicate ecotourism is assisting in building a sense of pride within individuals. Betty describes what she sees in the community, "since there has been drumming, dancing and more [cultural] knowledge, I think there is a lot more pride of who we are as Mi'kmaq people" (August 26, 2004). From Betty's comment, there is more pride and a stronger sense of a cultural identity, which Warry (2000) suggests is important for community wellness. Lee (1992) illustrates the importance of communities becoming a source of pride for individuals and how the "traditional cultural underpinnings must be reestablished" (216) to effectively regain Aboriginal identity. Ecotourism has impacted community wellness on Lennox Island by contributing to the reestablishment of a cultural identity among some individuals, as a result of the promotion of cultural performances and the pride shown by individuals who participate.

As seen from the interview results, ecotourism is promoting cultural performances, which in turn has increased the number of cultural groups in the community. The increased number of community members participating in

cultural performances allows for a cultural rule to be enforced that has the potential to affect how individuals in the community use alcohol and drugs. In describing a healthy community, Warry (2000) reveals that the groups he worked with envisioned community life where there was "much less alcohol" and the "recovery from alcoholism is closely connected to the need for cultural awareness and cultural esteem" (139). With a cultural rule that does not allow participation in cultural activities by individuals who have been using alcohol or drugs, community members have a choice to make. The increased participation in cultural groups, a cultural rule and the teachings that occur within these groups, such as the language, all lead to increased cultural awareness and, as Warry (2000) suggests, can contribute to a healthier community.

The positive impact that ecotourism has had on community wellness will benefit overall community development on Lennox Island now and in the future. If these impacts could be foreseen before programming is implemented, shifting certain facilities or cooperating with other departments, such as the Health Clinic, has the potential to enhance the impact ecotourism has on community wellness.

V. Community Environmental Stewardship Philosophy

The concept of respect for the natural world is important to many Aboriginal societies (Riemer, 2004; MacGregor, 1993). In Riemer's (2004) research, conflict arose between fishing tour guides and Aboriginal spear fishermen over the decline of the fish population.

> When living things are taken from nature, the Chippewa believe respect must be shown to the 'spirit' of those things. The tribal members I

> interviewed spoke of offering tobacco as a means to convey respect to the living thing whose life was being taken. (Riemer, 2004, 56)

Quotes such as this illustrate that there is a great respect by the Aboriginal spear fishermen towards the natural environment. From a slightly different angle, MacGregor (1993) asks a very simple question, 'where are you from?'. From a non-Aboriginal perspective, this is a very difficult question to answer; is it where I was born, is it where I grew up, or is it where I live now? Based on my own experience and through MacGregor's (1993) study, if you ask an Aboriginal person where they are from, there is no question, "they have a close connection with the land base of their band or tribe" (267). This connection to a sacred place is where "many of the ceremonies that link their relationship with the land" (MacGregor, 1993, 267) come from and make up who they are as a person. Respect and being from a 'sacred place' are two important concepts in understanding Aboriginal tourism and sustainability.

Not only is there an 'environmental philosophy' described in the literature as being a concept that Aboriginal communities espouse to, there are similar beliefs behind the definition of ecotourism itself (Ross & Wall, 1999). An Elder from Lennox Island describes ecotourism to me,

> Ecotourism is the ecology that is around you, if you go to [name withheld] Island on a motorboat you will not see all the ecology...you will see the flora and fauna, but you won't see the birds because they leave as soon as the noise comes. But you can go there with a kayak or row over there or drive the boat so far and shut the engine off and row the rest of the way and the birds are there. They might fly a little bit, skiddish of your boat but

> they won't go away. Where in the world can you go and see 200 species of birds in an hour, that is ecotourism (John, August 25, 2004)

From the Elder's description there is a strong 'connection to place', there is an understanding of the natural world and how it works, and an enthusiasm and respect shown for his reality.

Study results indicate that respect for the surrounding environment is an important concept to the Lennox Island First Nation as described by Prilla in the previous section. A former Chief of Lennox Island described the process that he and his Council would go through when considering development projects,

> we had three things to look at, we had to look at the impact on the people, we had to look at the impact on the community and the impact on the ecology surrounding the community. (Name withheld, August 25, 2004)

This notion of respect is identified in a number of areas including interviews, field notes, personal experience and formalized in the guiding principles outlined in the ecotourism strategic plan (MacHattie & Wolfe-Keddie, 2000), as well as in the literature described above.

A healthy relationship with the land is viewed by Bell (1999a) as one element of wellness in the overall community development picture. Based on the results of this study and supporting literature, Table 5 includes a new component called Environmental Stewardship Philosophy and is considered as the foundation for the Lennox Island ecotourism project. The Environmental Stewardship Philosophy materialized as a result of the ecotourism initiative and reflects integral elements of traditional knowledge on Lennox Island. This philosophy is grounded in the culture of the community and is reflected in how they manage the resources necessary for sustaining ecotourism.

In summary, ecotourism can have many impacts within a community and both the tourism and Aboriginal community development literature assist in understanding the broad impacts. The biggest lesson learned from this research project is that tourism can impact community wellness and knowing this, instead of unintentional outcomes, impacts can now be planned.

C. Recommendations

Projects focused strictly on economic development in Aboriginal communities tend to fail. Aboriginal community development that is grounded in local knowledge, consistent with the values and culture, and controlled locally has a far greater chance of succeeding in terms of meaningful development for a community. Tourism as a form of Aboriginal community development, when considered from a broad perspective, can lead to this meaningful development.

The Lennox Island Aboriginal ecotourism initiative is a form of community development that the First Nation has chosen. The Lennox Island First Nation should now consider the impacts of ecotourism from a more comprehensive perspective so that they can be in a better position to evaluate, plan for, and manage the types of impacts that are important to the community. The unintentional impacts that ecotourism produced can now be incorporated into future planning. For instance, the erosion of cultural knowledge is an issue that the community may be interested in addressing. Through ecotourism programming, each youth employed by the project could spend time, one-on-one, with an Elder to prepare them to lead a group of tourists on a guided walk through the Path of our Forefathers. This would allow Elders to pass on

knowledge in a more traditional manner and re-enforce the youth's self-identity of who they are and where they come from.

The benefits to Lennox Island of understanding community development from a comprehensive perspective does not only apply during the tourist season, but could be realized throughout the year. For example, new cultural groups have been formed since the ecotourism project was initiated and a cultural rule is enforced that does not tolerate the use of alcohol or drugs, this may be an avenue for the community to address the issue of substance abuse. Ecotourism programming, in this case, would focus on establishing year round performances for the various groups. The increased number of 'practice sessions' and performances would allow for more choice in the community that may lead to a reduction in alcohol and drug use. Another area that may not need much programming, but more encouragement, is that of community use of the trail. To improve community wellness, consideration should be given for use of the trails for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing in the winter and a walking club in the spring and fall when there are fewer tourists around. Understanding how the ecotourism project can impact overall community development and focusing resources in areas that are important to members of the community can lead to positive benefits.

There has been very little explicit links developed in the literature that examine how Aboriginal tourism impacts a community. We know that tourism can generate revenue, provide jobs, even develop capacity within a community, but we know little on how overall Aboriginal community development has been

impacted by tourism. This study has demonstrated that by exploring tourism's role in a broader context of Aboriginal community development, the impacts that can be realized in areas such as wellness and learning. Other communities, consultants, or researchers who approach tourism projects from a broad perspective that includes economic development, empowerment, learning, wellness and environmental stewardship, should now be able to develop strategies that focus on the key elements of community development that the community deem as important. This approach would give rise to meaningful development and ultimately sustainable community development that Aboriginal communities are so desperately searching for.

From this study, it can be seen that the combination of ecotourism and community development is an area where there are many opportunities for future research. For example, research that determines how tourism can be better utilized as a meaningful community development tool, which may include developing planning frameworks that are based on principles like the Four C's, should be given consideration. A natural extension from this research study would be to consider how ecotourism impacts community development on Lennox Island over the long term. The ecotourism project is in the early stages of Butler's (1980) Tourist Area Life Cycle model and over time, it would be beneficial for the Lennox Island First Nation to review these impacts to determine how the project could be managed even more effectively, and continue to be meaningful to the community. This type of project would demonstrate the impacts

of ecotourism to the community and potentially be a basis for continued community support.

This study considers many of the beneficial impacts that ecotourism is having on Lennox Island. It should be noted that there were very few members in the community who considered the negative impacts of ecotourism. I asked the question 'how many is too many tourists?' and no individual expressed a concern about the maximum number of tourists that the Island could potentially accommodate. In Doxey's irritation index (Mason, 2003) the community would still be considered in the 'euphoria' stage where there is still an open door policy to visitors. As movement continues along Butler's (1980) Tourist Area Life Cycle model, it will be likely that members in the community become less accommodating toward tourists. It is recommended that the Lennox Island First Nation begin to prepare for greater numbers of tourists and begin to plan how to manage for the potential negative impacts that will arise with this form of development.

D. Conclusion

Through community-based planning on Lennox Island a ten-year strategic plan was developed to guide an ecotourism project. The stated goals in the strategic plan have largely been met and there have been some unexpected, beneficial impacts as a result of the project. The Aboriginal tourism and community development literature do not examine the impacts of ecotourism on overall community development from a modified Four C's approach. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that: If Lennox Island Aboriginal

ecotourism is developed in light of a conceptual framework that provides insight into the meaningful dimensions of aboriginal community development, then purposefully designed ecotourism programs can have planned impacts on areas such as community wellness and learning. If Aboriginal tourism development is considered from a comprehensive perspective, where impacts are understood from a social, cultural, political and environmental context, then meaningful community development can begin to be realized.

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APPENDIX A

Acadia University
Faculty of Recreation Management

Lennox Island Aboriginal Ecotourism Research Project

INFORMED ORAL / WRITEN CONSENT FORM

Research Project Title: Examining how Ecotourism has Impacted Community Development on Lennox Island

Investigator: Scott C. Harris (902) 847-0802

The purpose of this research is to examine how ecotourism has impacted community development on Lennox Island. You have been identified as someone who can contribute to this research. Your participation is strictly voluntary and the research will be used by the Lennox Island First Nation to evaluate its Aboriginal Ecotourism development.

You will be interviewed for approximately one and half hours and asked questions with regards to the Lennox Island Ecotourism project and community economic development, community empowerment, community wellness, and community learning. You are under no obligation to answer specific questions and you may withdraw your consent and terminate your participation at any time. These interviews will be audiotaped and later transcribed. These tapes and transcriptions will be assigned a number and locked in a filing cabinet to ensure confidentiality. After transcriptions of your interview, you will receive a copy of the verbatim transcriptions. You will be asked to confirm themes and verify your information has been interpreted in accordance with your views.

The final research project will be made available to you upon request. A copy will be submitted to Chief and Council and Acadia University as part of a Master's thesis. The research findings may be published in a journal but confidentiality of your information will be ensured.

Consent to participate in this cooperative research project between the Lennox Island First Nation and Acadia University can be provided by either orally agreeing, or by giving your written consent below. By agreeing to participate in this research project, indicates that you have read and understood the nature of this research and agree to voluntarily participate.

I _____ (print name), hereby provide written consent to voluntary participate in this research project.

_____ (participant signature), _____ (date)