A Critical Frame Analysis of Northern Ontario's 'Forestry Crisis'

by

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I hearby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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ABSTRACT

Since 2001, the forest sector and forest communities across Northern Ontario have experienced many challenges. In response, there has been significant provincial debate and policy reform surrounding the use and control of Crown forests, and some local leaders have established the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation (NSFC) under the federal Forest Communities Program (FCP) to collaborate for much needed economic and governance alternatives. This process has been difficult and characterized by uncertainty and conflict. This research examines evolving social framings of Northern Ontario's 'forestry crisis' and the consequences of uneven power relations in the Northeast Superior Region of Ontario, Canada.

Four core research questions were pursued: 1) how do different actors frame the forestry crisis in the Northeast Superior Region (e.g., problems, solutions and different actors)? 2) Do actors' frames change over time? 3) What forms and sources of power are present and how do they influence, if at all, the construction of shared meaning? 4) How does social learning influence the way actors approach forest management problems related to policy, planning and practice?

A single embedded case study design and mixed methods approach enabled analysis at the regional and organizational scales, for the period 2001-2009. A key informant survey assessed regional public-civic-private perceptions regarding the use and control of Crown forests. Fifty-nine interviews and over 200 documents from local and regional newspapers and reports were examined. Direct observations from two NSFC meetings and two regional conferences regarding Ontario's forest governance challenges supplemented these data. Actors' contrasting and shifting views were coded using QSR Nvivo 7 and analyzed for convergence as evidence of collective reframing.

Survey results and frame analysis established two main perspectives of the 'forestry crisis': 1) a conventional perspective in which forest companies hold the primary interest in resource extraction as policy agents; and, 2) an alternative view that seeks increased municipal and Aboriginal control of forests to achieve equity and provide regional stability. Power relations reinforced an entrenched community of interest, including both internal and external actors (e.g., investors, mill managers and workers, bush workers, and government regulators), that has formed around a common goal and/or set of beliefs (i.e., timber extraction and scientific forestry). These interests have historically reproduced uneven social relations and overridden communities of place and collective place-based identities.

The analysis builds to 14 conclusions that address the core research questions, highlights of which include:

- Social framings of the forestry crisis in the Northeast Superior Region, as well as identities and local culture, are mediated by core-periphery dynamics. Such conditions normalize ongoing community instability and oversimplify notions of sustainability which prioritize a perpetual timber supply and economic values.

- Commitment to place before interests provides a basis to develop trust and mutual understanding of each other and shared problems, and enable reframing of common identities based on shared values and local problems/opportunities.

- Public control and collaboration are strongly valued in the Northeast Superior Region. Many leaders and residents want control over resources devolved to the municipal level; however, awareness and a model for effective implementation are needed.

- Independent local forums are valuable for developing alternative and representative social framings.

- Relational power works to consolidate various forms of agent-based power in dominant actors rather than facilitating its distribution.

- Actors with unmatched positional and expertise power can (un)intentionally subvert reframing processes through limiting the participation of dissenters, thereby controlling the organizational framings guiding actions.

- Dominant social relations influenced the perceived range of reasonable or desirable options as dominant actors bounded the problem to serve conventional interests, which in turn constrained debate about solutions.

- Reframing a common place-based identity inclusive of Aboriginals and municipalities requires the willing redistribution of agent-based power and full recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

This research builds understanding of how power relations affect the social framings that drive action in settings of crisis, conflict and uncertainty, and provides new evidence to bridge concepts from framing and social learning theory. It supports the premise that social learning is a political process inherent in multi-party collaboration, in which reconciliation of individual and group identities occurs alongside the negotiation of problem and solution definitions. By documenting regional and NSFC perspectives, this research supports the search for alternative tenure models to reinvigorate Ontario's forest economy and communities.

Ten recommendations for NSFC, the Forest Communities Program or emerging collaborative organizations focus on organizational governance and practice to improve conditions affecting power relations and social learning. Main points include considering the need to organize culturally appropriate public workshops on forest issues to meet the need for deliberative space; increase access to organizational information and opportunities for NSFC plans to be publicly reviewed; actively participate in Ontario tenure policy reform discussions to develop, publicize and implement policy alternatives; support Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and meaningful resolution of First Nations settlement negotiations; expand NSFC board representation to include at-large public and ex-officio provincial members; decentralize organizational structures to establish a physical presence in partner communities and draw on leadership and capacity from the whole region; and, establish an explicit rationale for and clearly identify geographical boundaries for the organization.

needed comradery. Culum Canally, J.J. Childs, Craig Love, Jeremy McAndrew, Dan McCarthy, and Ryan Snider remain standouts among a shifting cast of friends, both on and off campus, who supplied many laughs as well as opportunities to test emerging ideas about my doctoral research and teaching. Culum deserves recognition for his eagerness to challenge me and engage in lively discussions (at any time of day and in any weather) about our mutual research and teaching endeavours. Lindsay Woodside deserves recognition for being a good friend to our family over the past four years.

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DEDICATION

To my wonderful girls – Sadie, Georgia and Amy.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAC	Annual Allowable Cut
ABCPF	Association of British Columbia Professional Foresters
ACM	Adaptive Co-management
AWIC	Algoma Workforce Investment Committee
BC	British Columbia
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CCFM	Canadian Council of Forest Ministers
CCFN	Chapleau Cree First Nation
CCPA	Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
CEP	Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada
CERC	Chapleau Economic Renewal Committee
CFS	Canadian Forest Service
CIFINRSSC	Canadian Institute of Forestry Interim National Recruitment Strategy Steering Committee
CRDC	Chapleau Regional Development Corporation
DLL	Double-loop Learning
ECO	Environmental Commissioner of Ontario
EDCW	Economic Development Corporation of Wawa
EDO	Economic Development Officer
ENGO	Environmental Non-government Organization
FCP	Forest Communities Program
FENOM	Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities
FMP	Forest Management Plan
INAC	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
INORD	Institute for Northern Ontario Research and Development
LCC	Local Citizen Committee
MCFSC	Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness
NAN	Nishnawbe Aski Nation
NESMG	Northeastern Superior Mayors' Group
NGO	Non-government Organization
NOMA	Northern Ontario Municipal Association
NOSCP	Northern Ontario Sustainable Communities Partnership
NRCAN	Natural Resources Canada
NRTEE	National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy
NSFC	Northeast Superior Forest Community
NSRCF	Northeast Superior Regional Chiefs Forum
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Product
OFA	Ontario Forestry Association
OFC	Ontario Forestry Coalition
OFIA	Ontario Forestry Industries Association
OLMA	Ontario Lumber Manufacturers Association
OMAA	Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs

OMEI	Ontario Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure
OMNDM	Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines
OMNDMF	Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, and Forestry
OMNR	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
OPFI	Ontario Professional Foresters Association
REM	Resource and Environmental Management
RPF	Registered Professional Forester
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SFL	Sustainable Forest Licence
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SLL	Single-loop Learning
STRONG	Saving the Region of Ontario North Group
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
UOI	Union of Ontario Indians
USW	United Steelworkers

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1. Defining the Research Problem and Context

Changes in Canadian forest management reflect a global response to the limitations of conventional resource and environmental management (REM). As a field of practice and research, REM has been criticized for becoming too concentrated on the specialized knowledge of scientific 'experts', top-down government decision making, and technical and market solutions (Ostrom 1990; Bryant and Wilson 1998; Röling 2002). Alternately, there is a drive for more collaborative and adaptive approaches that include multiple knowledge forms, non-state actors with different interests and values, as well as more consideration of contextual forces influencing human-environment interactions. It has been documented that collaboration can foster social learning and so bridge disconnects and balance power relations through building mutual understanding and joint problem solving competency (Keen et al 2005; Susskind et al 2007). Social learning approaches support the ongoing and interactive process in which groups of people with diverse values and knowledge negotiate and reflect on experience to develop shared meaning to resolve common problems through social change. Such novel approaches are expected to produce outcomes that are more acceptable to various actors with different training, levels of expertise, values, and ultimately, political motivations.

However, as Armitage et al (2008: 96) point out, "learning is neither value free nor politically neutral." Increasingly, scholars emphasize that the effects of power relations and politics in social learning require more attention (Sinclair and Diduck 2001; Keen and Mahanty 2006; Wildemeersch 2007; Armitage et al 2008). In particular, how power relations affect learning among actors in a given 'problem domain' is (or should be) an important question in the context of REM crises in which emerging collaborations stand to increase regional stability. Early problem and solution definitions can have a lasting effect on resultant formal organizations.

These overarching ideas provide the entry point for my research with the nascent Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation (NSFC) in Northern Ontario, Canada. Forest dependent communities in Northern Ontario are said to be in 'crisis' (Stewart 2005; Woods

2007) due to the decline of the forest sector since 2001. In the Superior East Region alone, four of five major forestry employers closed between 2003 and 2009, variously affecting six neighbouring towns and eight Aboriginal communities. The ensuing spiral of decline presents well-documented problems of the classic mill town life cycle: widespread unemployment, out-migration and the loss of skilled labour and youth, a declining tax base and service loss (Lucas 1971; Beattie et al. 1981; Decter et al. 1989).

Faced with idled mills, industry restructuring and the spectre of fading conventional forest development, some leaders and residents are working to create new collaborative spaces and opportunities to re-imagine human-forest relationships. At a time of significant provincial forestry debate and policy reform (Table 1.1), municipal, and more recently, Aboriginal leaders have formed the NSFC under the federal Forest Communities Program (FCP) to search for much needed socio-economic solutions. In the context of an escalating forestry crisis, my research focuses on the evolving perspectives and interactions of organizational and regional actors.

Table 1.1. Recent Events and Publications Surrounding Ontario's Current Forestry Debate

February 18, 2009 – Ontario Forest Industry Association (OFIA) holds panel discussion on forest tenures at annual general meeting

March 4-5, 2009 - Northern Ontario Sustainable Communities Partnership Workshop: *Community Forests: A Tenure Reform Option for Community Sustainability in Northern Ontario.* Thunder Bay

April 22-24, 2009 - Ontario Professional Foresters' Association 52nd Annual Meeting: *Whose Forest is it Anyway? The Role of Tenure, Pricing and Ownership in the Future of Ontario's Forests.* Sudbury

April 23, 2009 - Hon. Donna Cansfield, Minister of Natural Resources announces formal review of Ontario's Crown forest tenure system

May 7, 2009 - OMNR Industry Relations Branch presents provincial plans for tenure reform at Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities Annual Meeting, Sudbury

June 23, 2009 - Premier McGuinty announces move of OMNR forestry branch to Ministry of Northern Development and Mines

August 27, 2009 - Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry releases discussion paper, *Ontario's Forests, Ontario's Future: Modernizing Ontario's Forest Tenure and Pricing System*

1.2. Purpose and Approach

Understanding how people linked by a common societal problem interpret experience in the context of uneven power relations is a central challenge for resource management. Informed by social learning (e.g., Argyris and Schön 1978; Keen et al 2005) and framing theory (Gray 2003; Forsyth 2003), my research follows the constructivist view that people create meaning through an ongoing and interactive social process of co-constructing reality (discussed in Chapter 3 and 4). Inspired by political ecology (e.g., Forsyth 2003; Escobar and Paulson 2005; Raik et al 2008), I apply a critical lens to understand the values and interests that underlie dominant and marginalized social framings in Ontario forest governance.

This approach to studying emerging collaborations amidst crisis, conflict, and change, helps to identify different sets of perspectives (or social framings) and actors, and enables examination of their dynamics in a given context and policy community. It also highlights shifts in dominant ideas and actions and whose interests are being served.

1.3. Assumptions

This research is guided by basic assumptions about the nature of social learning and power relations, as well as the relationships of certain concepts and their relevance. First, using frame analysis to study social learning is appropriate because double-loop learning is conceptually analogous with reframing processes that guide action (Argyris and Schön 1978; Mezirow 1994; Parson and Clark 1995; Pahl-Wostl 2009) (discussed in Chapter 3). Second, changes in individual and organizational actions and perspectives (social framings) are one indication that learning has occurred (Argyris and Schön 1978; Dale 1989). Third, groupings of social framings and actions can be identified that indicate subscribership to one or more discourses (Dryzek 2005; Escobar and Paulson 2005). Fourth, frames are not mutually exclusive and can be contradictory (Gray 2003). Fifth, dominant framings can be linked to powerful groups and used to elicit different forms and sources of power as a way to understand how power affects social learning (Forsyth 2003). Making these assumptions explicit grounds the research in the literature, explains the beliefs and logic underpinning the research design, justifies the methods for data collection and analysis, and links the researcher to the research.

1.4. Core Research Questions and Objectives

1.4.1. Research Questions

The specific questions for this research are:

1. How do different actors frame the forestry crisis in the Northeast Superior Region? (e.g., problems, solutions, and perspectives of different actors);

2. Do actors' frames change over time? How? Why?

3. What forms/sources of power are present and how do they influence, if at all, the construction of shared meaning (frame convergence/divergence)?

4. How does social learning—evidenced by the construction of 'shared meaning' through the development of common frames—influence the way actors approach forest management problems related to policy, planning and practice?

1.4.2. Objectives

Based on the above questions, four main objectives are pursued:

1. Use frame analysis methods to study social learning and the response to Northern Ontario's forestry challenges, in order to conduct a systematic assessment of frames among different actors, and to identify events and interactions contributing to reframing (Questions 1 and 2).

2. Identify different sources and forms of power held by actors and analyze how power relations influence social learning and the construction of shared meaning (Questions 3 and 4).

3. Observe what has been learned by actors about the problem domain and determine the implications in terms of changes to forest management policy and practice (Question 3).

4. Develop a conceptual framework which integrates concepts from social learning, collaborative management/planning and political ecology to guide critical research on social learning in REM settings (Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4).

1.5. Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation has 8 chapters. In Chapter 1, I have introduced the research problem context and case study focus. I have also outlined the main strands of social learning, collaboration and political ecology theory I draw upon, as well as the guiding questions and main objectives.

In the next chapter (2), I outline the development of conventional forest management in Canada since 1900. I discuss the formation of forest governance institutions that have long supported primary industry as well as the common strengths and weaknesses of the conventional approach to contextualize public and academic calls for change.

Chapter 3 reviews relevant themes from the collaboration, social learning and political ecology literatures. This review provides the conceptual and empirical background that has informed the identification and refining of the research questions, objectives and relevant concepts and methods for the research design. I present and explain the conceptual framework for the study at the end of Chapter 3.

I present the research design in Chapter 4. I position the research as primarily embracing a constructivist view of reality and describe my approach to inductive, community-based research. I map out the research process and criteria for selection of the case study. The application of a mixed methods approach is explained and an argument is made for the utility of a single embedded case study design to account for nested scales of analysis. I then specify methods used for data collection and analysis.

Chapter 5 is the first of three analysis chapters. I introduce the case study region and examine the influence of historical and geographical hinterland contexts on forest governance and development. An overview of the research site is provided, including discussion of biophysical, cultural and socio-economic characteristics relevant to current challenges in the forest sector. I then present results from a survey of the Crown forest tenure system to highlight 'high-level' themes and differences among actors' attitudes relating to the ongoing forestry crisis and potential responses.

Chapter 6 provides a closer examination of how different actors framed the forestry crisis since about 2001. Through a frame analysis of documents and interviews focussed on the Northeast Superior Region, I examine how the perspectives and interactions of traditionally dominant and marginalized groups evolved. In particular, I show how several grassroots forums emerged in response to the crisis to reframe problems, solutions and identities.

Chapter 7 analyzes the emergence of the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation and the Northeast Superior Regional Chiefs Forum as part of the local search for solutions to the forestry crisis. I examine different social framings as well as forms and sources of power at work among the different actors within the NSFC and how different actors' actions have shaped the development of NSFC.

In the final chapter (8), I synthesize the main research findings with reference to the core research questions and offer 14 main conclusions. I then highlight the main conceptual, practical and methodological contributions and reflect on the strengths and limitations of the study. Ten recommendations for the NSFC are offered. I close by identifying future research needs and opportunities.

CHAPTER 2 -- CONVENTIONAL FOREST MANAGEMENT: EMERGENCE, LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.1. Overview

This chapter briefly reviews the origins of conventional forest management in North America as part of the burgeoning conservation movement, with a focus on prevailing ideology and forestry institutions in Canada. Key characteristics and critiques of conventional forest management (and resource management in general) are provided to explain public and academic calls for change surrounding the use and control of public forests. Specifically, attention is given to growing recognition of the social and ecological complexity of forest management and planning, contrasting and evolving public and professional values and issues of representation surrounding forest use and control. In doing so, this chapter provides context for why collaborative and learning approaches to Crown forest management are being pursued in Canada and points to the significance of research on power relations in emerging collaborative settings.

2.2. Origins of Conventional Forest Management

Strengths and limitations of conventional forest management must be considered in the context from which it emerged. In North America, conventional forest management developed under the dominant forest management paradigm of the early 1900s—utilitarian conservation—which was based primarily on instrumental values and the products or functions provided by forests for human use. The German forestry tradition, fostered in North America by E.B. Fernow and Gifford Pinchot in the late 1800s, provided the main foundational influences for the forest conservation era (Drushka 1985; Apsey et al 2000). Based on the principles and practices of scientific forest management, Fernow advocated sustained yield forestry to produce 'normal' forests that could support both commercial harvesting and preservation (Drushka 1985). However, this required the conversion of existing "abnormal" forests to "create a certain type of age-stratified forest which would provide predictable and equal volumes of timber each year, in perpetuity" (Apsey et al 2000: 49). An important oversight or misunderstanding was that it had taken centuries of deliberate management to produce such forest conditions in Europe (Drushka 1985; Apsey et al 2000). Economic values and forest protection prevailed under the

conservation ethic and timber liquidation, fire, insects, and disease all became foci of management control. The multiple use component of sustained yield forestry, meant to ensure a flow of non-timber resources such as fuel, water and fish, was deemphasized or claimed rather than realized (Behan 1990).

Fernow's vision for sustained yield forest management was expected to be achieved by "governments and perpetual corporations or large capitalists" (Drushka 1985: 29). Industrialists supported the newly forming Canadian forest tenure system because it provided an inexpensive timber supply without the burden of ownership (Apsey et al. 2000). The early boom years (about 1900-1930) of the conservationist era encouraged the notion of a permanent forest industry, and private forest enterprise was considered essential to economic growth (Apsey et al. 2000; Beckley 2003). Development-oriented policies successfully attracted private capital to develop public forests and create economic growth, infrastructure and provincial revenues (Hayter and Barnes 1997). Forest resource development was primarily concerned with generating resource rents and taxes on industrial and employment income, rather than local development.

This was a formative period of creation and change in North American forestry because much of the industrial structure of forestry was built, many of the forestry schools in existence today were opened, the profession of forestry evolved, research establishments were founded, and the technological revolution began replacing muscles with machines in the woods and mills (Apsey et al. 2000: 31). Both the US and Canadian Forest Services were established in the first decade of the 1900s (Beckley 2003). In Canada, large bureaucracies and closed policy networks consisting of government and industry actors alone were formed to administer large-scale forest development (Ross 1995; Hessing et al 2005). Forestry schools were established across Canada (e.g., University of Toronto 1907; University of New Brunswick 1908; Laval University 1910; University of British Columbia 1918; Lakehead 1947) to address the created need for trained forestry professionals[1]. Canada's first forestry congress was held in Ottawa in 1906 under Prime

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[1] This self-supporting view endures in the language of the Canadian forestry profession today. For example, to address growing concerns for decreasing forestry program enrollment, The Canadian Institute of Forestry released a report entitled: *The crisis in post-secondary enrollments in forestry programs: A call to action for Canada's future forestry professional/technical workforce – A White Paper on Post-Secondary Forestry Recruitment*. According to the Interim National Recruitment Strategy Steering Committee of the Canadian Institute of Forestry (2006: 57):

Minister Wilfrid Laurier to consider national concerns for forest resource use (Mitchell 1986).

The forest industry, government, and labour (with links to and counterparts in professional

forestry associations and schools) assumed the primary role in management. It was also during

this period that the dominant ideologies of the resource management era—economism,

scientism, and technocracy (Ludwig 2001) (Table 2.1.)—were enshrined in North American

forest management.

Table 2.1. Dominant ideologies of the modern resource management era

Economism	Economic values emphasized at the expense of all others. An anthropocentric ideology that views nature based on conferred value.
Scientism	Belief that science is inherently capable of solving all human problems; derives from the unquestioned achievements of science. Reflects an oversimplified view of how science relates to social and political issues.
Technocracy	Tendency to view technological innovation as the magic bullet for resolving policy problems.

(based on Caldwell 1990 in Ludwig 2001)

2.3. Characteristics and Critiques of Conventional Forest Management

2.3.1. Basic Characteristics: Linearity, Efficiency and End Goal(s)

The main goal of conventional forest management is timber production for human use (Binkley

1999; Menzies 2004; PROFOR and World Bank 2004). Streamlined planning and management

processes emphasize efficiency in producing plans and attaining management goals. This

approach is associated with synoptic planning, or the rational comprehensive approach, which is

the dominant planning tradition (Hudson 1979). The focus on a single resource, productivity,

threat mitigation and economic value is maintained through top-down and centralized

management authority, usually held by a single agency. Under this model, the goal is to use the

immense resources and administrative capacity of large government bureaucracies and private

industry to achieve certain management functions efficiently and effectively.

"Graduates of technology and baccalaureate forestry programs are the professional human resources required to steward and manage forest resources across Canada."

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As Holling (1995: 7) points out, conventional management aims to control a given variable(s) (e.g., fire, pestilence, flood or drought) and focus on a narrow purpose to solve problems: "modern engineering, technological, economic, and administrative experience can deal well with such narrowly defined problems." The management response to spruce budworm problems in New Brunswick, Canada is a good example: "as a feat of logistics, the program [which has been ongoing since 1952] has been outstanding. To track annual distribution of budworm populations and resultant damage over millions of hectares of forest with such precision and effectiveness of crop protection was exceptional" (Baskerville 1995: 51). Over the past century, forest fire prevention and suppression efforts in America have demonstrated similar capability in mitigating fire in large-scale forest ecosystems (Pyne 2004). But prescriptive technical solutions often overlook the complexity of ecological systems and disregard social systems, which can introduce further change or problems (Baskerville 1995).

2.3.2. Main Critiques: Reductionism, Control-Oriented and Social Conflict

Behan (1990: 14) observes that resource and environmental management (REM) has become fragmented through increased "specialization and reductionism" intended to help better understand complex problems (or sets of problems). Sustained yield management is taught on a disciplinary basis to produce individually certified professionals who specialize in forestry, recreation, wildlife biology, hydrology and range conservation. This 'silo' approach limits coordination and cooperation and can create jurisdictional problems and interagency turf battles (Mitchell 2002, 2005; Hessing et al 2005). Isolated resource managers and 'experts' from different disciplinary backgrounds work on resource-specific issues in vertically and horizontally fragmented organizational settings with minimal attention to the interrelatedness of REM problems.

Criticism is also directed at sustained yield forestry, which is based on an equilibrium model that assumes balance between growth and harvest can continue supply indefinitely (Behan 1990). Sustained yield can be generally defined as "the quantity or amount that a crop or population can produce continuously at a given intensity of management" (Ross 1995: 324). A central assumption is that ecosystems can be held static through manipulation to maintain certain preferred conditions. Sustained yield forestry holds that forest land area, nutrients and pests can

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be controlled in isolation of the rest of the ecosystem to produce a balance between net growth and harvest. This view also holds that forest ecosystems will return to a predictable state or set of conditions when usual management steps are followed. Main criticisms of the equilibrium view are that it does not account for ecosystem complexity, that dynamics are influenced by factors at multiple scales, that disturbance is a key feature of ecosystems, and multiple stable states are possible (Walker and Salt 2006).

Accordingly, Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) calculations in forestry have been criticized for using simplistic and unrealistic assumptions that fail to inventory resource stocks accurately and overestimate wood supplies (Baskerville 1995; Clapp 1998; Marchak et al 1999; May 2005). Subjectivity, manipulation, and politics have influenced the calculation of sustained yield quotas in forestry and fishing. Resultant overharvesting and insufficient reforestation, together with fire suppression, and pest treatment have contributed to significant fibre supply shortages across Canada (Baskerville 1995; Drushka 2003; May 2005; ECO 2005). Similarly, Hutchings et al's (1997) controversial paper "Is Scientific Inquiry Incompatible with Government Information Control" illustrated how bureaucratic interference in the scientific debate behind cod stock assessments during the mid 1980s inflated stock estimates and downplayed fishing impacts. The "selective exclusion of scientific information" on the part of bureaucrats enabled ongoing overfishing, which led to the decline of the fishery and significant socio-economic crisis in resource dependent communities (Hutchings et al 1997: 1202).

A related critique of conventional forestry concerns the leasing of public land to private, often transnational, corporations, and the uneven distribution of costs and benefits from the development of public resources. Critics argue that short-term leases (e.g., 25 years) administered through centrally-controlled state management systems and the mobility of capital in the global economy do not provide adequate incentives to profit-seeking companies to manage for multiple values, practice silviculture (replanting), pay regard to community concerns, or uphold pre-existing indigenous rights (Pedersen 1995; Contreras et al 2001; Haley and Nelson 2007). The current Canadian tenure system does not encourage private companies (and governments) to engage the spectrum of cultural and environmental values increasingly demanded by communities (Haley and Nelson 2007). The continued dominance of sustained

yield policy and focus on economic values in an era of Sustainable Forest Management (Adamowicz and Burton 2003) suggests that companies, without institutional reform, are unlikely to pursue alternatives (e.g., collaboration, learning and ecosystem-based approaches) that could better consider and share costs and benefits and facilitate learning from management practice and local experience.

Forestry challenges in New Brunswick illustrate the issues exacerbated by conventional forest management, in the context of technical solutions targeting spruce budworm, a naturally occurring defoliator species in the fir/spruce forests of north-eastern North America (Baskerville 1995). The success of conventional forest management in producing 'normal' or homogenous forest conditions that consistently maintained fir stands ideal for budworm would make the "budworm a perpetual problem for forest managers instead of a periodic problem" (Baskerville 1995: 60). Ongoing pest protection created more dense fir stands that contained more trees but of smaller diameter, creating higher harvesting costs and lower material value. Increased stand density also contributed to inconsistent regeneration, which reduced the timber available for harvest. Pest management at the provincial scale could not eradicate spruce budworm in an ecological system that extended beyond political boundaries. Spraying of insecticides created public controversy. The professional forestry community would not acknowledge these problems due in part to "an unwillingness to admit that the problem had occurred under what were supposed to have been controlled forest management conditions" (Baskerville 1995: 69). In complex and uncertain conditions, conventional forest management was unable to adapt to remedy pressing social and ecological problems. As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, a similar situation of conflict emerging from crisis has arisen in Northern Ontario.

Beckley (1998) posited an emerging legitimacy crisis in Canadian forestry between the public, and professional forest managers (and their academic and government institutions) who have traditionally controlled the management of public forests. Such conflict is thought to derive, in part, from the public perception that foresters hold a "science knows best" attitude and, on the other hand, that foresters' are frustrated with perceived public ignorance of forests (Robinson et al 2001). Hamersley Chambers and Beckley (2003: 120) link growth in public demand for involvement in forest management decision making to a general sense among

citizens that the natural and social sciences alone are unable to solve societal problems and that "politicians seem increasingly obligated to advance the interests of corporate globalization, labour unions, or the solidarity and dogma of political parties rather than the interests of their constituents". Several additional factors contribute to this divide.

Surveys of forest values, attitudes, and perceptions held by Canadian forest managers (Robinson et al 2001), American forest managers (Shindler 2003) and members of forest management planning public advisory committees (Wellstead et al 2003) reveal significant differences between these 'representatives' and the populations they are to serve. Regarding the Canadian advisory committees, such divergence has been partially attributed to the non-representative demographic profiles of committees, which mainly include men who are more educated and report higher incomes than the general public, and who more directly economically depend on forest/resource industries (Wellstead et al 2003; Parkins et al 2006).

Inadequate demographic representation in the forestry profession indicates a similar challenge. For example, while the proportion of Aboriginal people and women with forestry expertise has increased over the past decade, their numbers remain low (Hoberg et al 2003; Parsons and Prest 2003). Table 2.2 indicates the relative increase yet still low number of Aboriginal people with formal forestry training in Canada. Women too are underrepresented, when professional association involvement and postsecondary program enrolments are considered. For example, a 2004 survey of the Association of British Columbia Professional Foresters (ABCPF) membership (n=736) found that only 18% of its members were female (ABCPF 2004). Furthermore, female enrolment in traditional forestry programs at The University of British Columbia Faculty of Forestry is also only 26% (personal communication, C. Parsons, October 15, 2009). Reed (2003) provides evidence of male dominance in the

Table 2.2. Aboriginal people with professional and technical expertise in forestry in Canada

	1990	2003
PhD degrees	0	3
Registered Professional Foresters	3	17
Professional Foresters	6	40
Forest Technicians	--	287

(Adapted from Parsons and Prest 2003)

Canadian forest sector more broadly, which permeates forest industry workplaces, participation processes and media surrounding forest issues.

Also contributing to the negative image of foresters and forestry by the general public is the public perception that the forestry profession is environmentally destructive and economically unstable (Hoberg et al 2003). A 2003 Angus Reid poll (n=500) (ABCPF 2003) conducted for the ABCPF found that 45 per cent of public respondents in British Columbia (BC) were dissatisfied with forest management compared to 37 per cent who were satisfied. Only 16 per cent believed that forest management in BC had improved over the previous 5 years (since 1999), while more than one third believed it had worsened. 13 per cent indicated that clearcutting was their biggest concern with BC's forestry practices. Overcutting, the surtax on softwood export, and general job loss tied (7%) as the second biggest concerns among participants. By 2009, a follow-up poll (n=572) conducted by the ABCPF (2009) found that the number of dissatisfied BC residents had increased to 51 per cent, while 37 per cent were again generally satisfied. Once again, only 17 per cent of respondents felt forest management had improved over the previous 5 years (since 2003), while 42 per cent felt it had worsened. The 2009 survey did not ask respondents about their 'biggest concerns' regarding forestry in BC. According to these surveys, BC residents feel that the general quality of forest management has been decreasing since 1999. Evidently, Canadian forestry professionals are concerned about these negative perceptions and link them to falling forestry school enrolments and forecast human resource shortages for government and industry employers (e.g., Hoberg et al 2003; CIFINRSSC 2006).

The above challenges indicate a need for professional foresters and the forest industry to continue work to accommodate shifting societal values. Some (Kimmins 2002; Lane and MacDonald 2002) suggest that forestry has always evolved as a response to society's demands and needs. Encouraging perhaps is that longitudinal survey research on public involvement processes for forest management in Quebec found that attitudinal differences between public participants and forest managers can evolve (Cote and Bouthillier 2002). Cote and Bouthillier (2002) found that ongoing interaction between forest managers and users led to increased information-sharing and trust and contributed to the reduction of potential conflicts among

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parties interested in forest management. Recognition of the expertise of non-professionals enabled the contribution of valuable substantive knowledge that would not have otherwise been incorporated into management planning. The general trend towards more "inclusive and open" (McGurk et al 2006) forest management processes in Canada suggests that some policy makers, industry managers, scientists and residents value collaboration as a way to overcome the challenges of managing public forests in Canada.

2.4. A Way Forward for Managing Canada's Public Forests?

Against this backdrop, it should not come as a surprise that civic, public and private groups are seeking alternative models of forest governance. Participatory and collaborative decision making processes are intended to expose a range of forest sector actors to and incorporate a wider range of perspectives and knowledge into the social framings of environmental problems that drive political debate and action (Forsyth 2003). Notable is the move towards increased and broader public involvement in forest decision making, which reflects a worldwide trend in REM (Dorcey and McDaniels 2001; Plummer and Fitzgibbon 2004a; Armitage 2005; McGurk et al 2006). In Canadian forest management, public or stakeholder engagement has been advanced using several models: advisory committees/boards to government and industry (Parkins et al 2004; McGurk et al 2006; Robson and Kant 2009), public engagement processes required for environmental assessment and regional land use planning (Pedersen 1995), community forests and multi-group management authorities (Teitelbaum et al 2006; Bullock et al 2009), forest certification (Venne 2008: 115), and research-based organizations such as Model Forests (Sinclair and Lobe 2005), and more recently, the Forest Communities Program (Bullock 2009).

Academics (e.g., Robinson et al 2001; McGurk 2003; Bullock 2006), public (e.g., NRTEE 2005; CFS 2006), and civic groups (e.g., Greenpeace 2009) often cite widespread public ownership of Canada's forests—and their economic and ecological significance to rural resource communities, Aboriginal peoples and Canada as a whole—to justify increased participation and collaboration (Table 2.3). Indeed, with 374.14 million hectares of government-owned forest land, Canada far exceeds other G8 countries (except Russia at 882.98 million hectares) and all other developed nations with significant forest lands (Kant 2009). Perhaps the more compelling

justification for increasing participation and collaboration is the recognition that management capacity, information, and understanding do exist locally (Wismer and Mitchell 2005; CCFM 2008). Canadians increasingly are reaching higher levels of education, communication networks are improving, and interest groups are more organized (Hamersley Chambers and Beckley 2003: 119). Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), if incorporated in a culturally appropriate manner, can also offer insights that sustainable forest managers and planners frequently need but generally cannot access (Stevenson and Webb 2003). Slow diversification of governance structures is creating new forums for collaborative engagement among groups with traditionally uneven opportunities for participation, as well as redefining decision making roles and processes that contrast with previously criticized conventional state-lead, top-down, centralised, and technocratic approaches to environmental management and research (Bryant and Wilson 1998).

Table 2.3. Canadian Forest Facts, 2003-2008

- 93% publicly owned;
- 300 "forest-dependent" communities derived >50% of their employment from the forest sector in 2000;
- 800 Aboriginal communities located within Canada's productive forests, many dependent on the forest for traditional, non-economic uses;
- 400,000 jobs in wood product and paper manufacturing, logging, and forest services;
- $40 billion in wood products exported annually

(NFSC 2003-2008; NRTEE 2005; CFS 2006)

2.5. Summary

In this chapter, key developments and critiques of the conventional approach to forest management in North America have been presented. Moves toward collaborative approaches are part of efforts to address today's complex management problems. Such moves are significant with regard to the research questions in Chapter 1, especially how different actors perceive problems and solutions and how different views evolve and become dominant in collaborative settings as a response to shared crisis and common societal problems. The following chapter looks more closely at collaboration theory and how perspectives on social learning and power relations can be incorporated into a conceptual framework for the analysis of the 'forestry crisis' experience in Northern Ontario, Canada.

CHAPTER 3 -- TOWARDS COLLABORATIVE AND SOCIAL LEARNING APPROACHES TO PUBLIC FOREST MANAGEMENT IN CANADA

3.1. Overview

In this chapter, literature on collaboration, social learning, and political ecology is examined to explore links between selected concepts and methods relevant to studying the research problem outlined in Chapter 1. The first two sections briefly review definitions, key concepts and critiques from the collaboration and social learning literature in the context of REM. This is followed by a discussion that draws together elements necessary for and useful to conducting a critical frame analysis of learning in REM multiparty problem settings characterised by complexity and social conflict. In particular, I show that these literatures all provide some version(s) of what this research refers to as "social framings" (or frames in the case of individuals). Social framings can be used to study social learning as a response to crisis and change, as well as the effect of power relations on learning, actions and outcomes. A conceptual framework is presented to help explain the relationships among social framings, multi-loop learning, and different sources and forms of power.

3.2. Collaboration in Complex Problem Domains

Collaboration is associated with various REM approaches, for example, collaborative management and planning (Margerum 2002; Conely and Moote 2003), community-based natural resource management (Armitage 2005), community forestry (Bullock et al 2009), adaptive management (Lee 1993), co-management (Plummer 2006), adaptive co-management (Plummer and Armitage 2007), integrated and ecosystem-based management (Mitchell 2002; Slocombe and Hanna 2007) and sustainable forest management (Lane and McDonald 2002; Adamowicz and Burton 2003; CCFM 2008). The core concept of collaboration is the involvement of multiple parties linked by a mutual interest (Plummer and FitzGibbon 2004a). Gray (1985: 912) provides a straightforward definition and entry point: "(1) the pooling of appreciations and/or tangible resources, e.g., information, money, labor, etc. (2) by two or more stakeholders, (3) to solve a set of problems which neither can solve individually". While a good starting point, this

definition masks nuances of societal problem conditions, forums or processes, and stakeholders that can contribute to a richer understanding of collaboration in REM.

Gray's (1989) seminal work on multiparty collaboration assumes an interorganizational setting and problems that cut across levels of society. She was not concerned with single organizations and internally relevant problems that could be resolved unilaterally. Gray's (1989) rationale is based on the common acknowledgement that society's environmental and resource problems have become increasingly complex and uncertain, requiring diverse public, private and civic actors to become involved (Gray 1985, 1989; also Funtowicz and Ravetz 1991; Mitchell 2002). Complexity and uncertainty cause turbulent conditions characterized by rapid change and interconnections among organizational actions, whereby the actions of individual organizations often result in unanticipated consequences for themselves and a few others. However, unstable and seemingly unpredictable conditions create societal problems that exceed the capacity of even large and powerful organizations acting unilaterally (Gray 1985; 1989). The ongoing forestry crisis in Northern Ontario (described in Chapters 5-7) is one example of this sort of complex "problem domain".

Gray (1989: 28) believes that "collaboration offers an antidote to turbulence by building a collective capacity to reduce these unintended consequences. By building collective appreciations and sharing resources, organizations increase variety in their repertoire of responses." Significant here is the perceived importance of developing *collective appreciations* that are more comprehensive and detailed than *individual view*s to serve as the basis for selecting future courses of action. Generating a more commonly accepted and richer understanding of complex problems implies some reconciliation of different problem perspectives, as well as underlying values and assumptions. Gray's (2003) later work develops this notion of shared appreciations by examining the construction and evolution of "frames" in multiparty environmental problem domains. Explained in a subsequent section (3.3), my research interprets the process of developing these shared appreciations or social framings as social learning.

A range of benefits is cited in the collaboration literature based on normative and operational considerations (Table 3.1). In addition to these benefits, collaboration is pursued for two general needs (Gray 1989; Conley and Moote 2003): 1) to resolve conflict by linking

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opponents through a joint search for information and solutions that satisfy different interests (e.g., Daniels and Walker 1996a; Lewicki et al 2003; Gray 2004); and, 2) to advance shared visions for the "collective good of the stakeholders involved" (Gray 1989: 8). But stakeholders must first agree to work together as a preliminary step to defining what the shared vision will be, which can then be discovered or refined through social learning processes supported by collaborative arrangements relevant to the broader problem domain and context (e.g., Daniels and Walker 1996a; Schusler et al 2003; Plummer 2006). Both motivations are likely to be present in many collaborative settings.

Table 3.1. Commonly cited benefits of collaboration

Social Justice and Equity
- Ensures consideration of interests of each stakeholder and future generations
- Encourages more inclusive and representative engagement
- Increases stakeholder awareness and education
- Increases resource access and use rights can improve livelihoods and social security/new sources of income
- Enhances long-term sustainability of resources and related community cultures
- Improves discipline, accountability, and legitimacy in problem domain through checks and balances
- Empowerment improves governance in state and community institutions

Technical, Effectiveness, and Efficiency
- Broad problem analysis (various perspectives and knowledge) improves understanding and quality solutions
- Participation enhances acceptance of solution/actions and commitment to implementation
- Diversifies response capability
- Can help to reopen deadlocked negotiations or avoid future impasse
- Stakeholders retain ownership of solutions
- Stakeholders most familiar with the problem invent most suitable solutions
- Increased potential for innovation
- Costs are shared and/or high costs of alternative methods avoided (e.g., litigation)
- Reduce enforcement costs
- Including those with most impact on resources means solutions with more impact
- Improved resource quality through better protection
- Collaboration improves adaptability
- Improves stakeholder relations and trust (social capital) as basis for future actions

(Gray 1989; CIFOR 2005: 11; Schusler et al 2003)

Opportunities to influence the earliest stages of emerging collaborative arrangements are critical for structuring future stakeholder interactions, organizational functions, and outcomes (Gray 1985; 1989). Social learning begins during this loosely defined informal process stage,

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during which people and groups become interested in learning about a common problem, other stakeholders, and their own personal positions towards developing common understanding and values—the core social framings—for mutual benefit and future engagement. Linked to this stage is the existence and development of trust and relationships that constitute "social capital" which can be both a process feature and a product of collaboration and social learning (Plummer and FitzGibbon 2007).

Collaboration implies a process of interaction for sharing ideas and resources, and for sharing power and decision making among participants (Selin and Chavez 1995). Power relations among different actors mediate the exchange and coproduction of social framings that in turn guide actions. Following a critical political ecology approach (Forsyth 2003) to collaboration and learning means examining how, why, and by whom dominant social framings are created. This requires close attention to the contexts, social interactions and processes that facilitate the development of social framings as well as how different forms of power manifest in dominant social framings guiding human-environment interactions. Outlined below, social learning theory and political ecology furnish additional insights for the conceptual framework for this research.

3.3. Social Learning: Definitions and Critiques

Social learning often remains an implicit or 'background' process in collaboration and so is promoted for many of the same benefits (Table 3.1) and is subject to similar challenges related to access, capacity, and communication (Table 3.2). Advocates suggest that social learning can produce 'better' citizens through moral and cognitive development and thereby affirm and improve democracy (Mezirow 1994; Webler et al 1995; Fitzpatrick 2006; Angeles and Gurstein 2007). A focus on learning—defined here as the revision and expansion of an individual's "frames" used to assign meaning and interpret experience for understanding (Mezirow 1994; Parson and Clark 1995)—reveals underlying processes and interactions among stakeholders that influence the construction of social framings used to guide collaborative action (discussed in section 3.3).

Table 3.2. Commonly cited challenges to social learning and collaboration

- Lack of inclusiveness and opportunities for involvement (e.g., elitism, closed policy networks, exclusion of marginalized groups)
- Negative influences of power imbalances and coercion
- Lack of capacity (e.g., personnel, organizational, financial, and informational resources)
- Lack of willingness among individuals and groups to work together (turf battles, intractable conflict)
- Information challenges: poor communication (including dishonesty); lack of accurate and complete information; information storage (organizational memory)
- Closed-mindedness, resistant cultures and ideology
- High turnover rates that erode experience, creating learning shortfalls
- Lack of time; more value placed on action rather than thought
- Restrictions on innovation and experiment/"margin for learning" (e.g., high risk)
- Complexity makes learning outcomes and causal links difficult to interpret
- Learning processes that do not match different learning styles

(Argyris and Schön1978; Levitt and March 1988; Gray 1989; Mezirow 1994; Selin and Chavez 1995; Bernard and Armstrong 1998; Sinclair and Diduck 2001; Diduck and Mitchell 2003; Diduck et al 2005)

Scholars from diverse backgrounds (e.g., REM, organizational development; planning; social psychology; adult education) have shaped the social learning literature. Social learning means various things to different people in terms of who is involved, what is learned, and how and where learning occurs (Parson and Clark 1995; Maarleveld and Dangbegnon 1999; Armitage et al 2008). In addition to its use in REM (Leeuwis and Pyburn 2002; Keen et al 2005; Wals et al 2007), we see learning as governance (Angeles and Gurstein 2007), planning (Friedmann 1987), the policy process (Glasbergen 1996; Clark 2002; Hessing et al 2005; Michaels et al 2006) implementation (McLaughlin 1976; Majone and Wildavsky 1979), and adaptive monitoring (Guijt 2007).

As a tool meant to address uncertainty and complexity in large-scale managed ecosystems, adaptive management explicitly focuses on learning by treating policies and management interventions as experiments in order to build lessons from monitored outcomes into future decisions and actions (Walters 1986; Lee 1993; Holling 1995; Jiggins and Roling 2000). A "logical extension" (Plummer and Armitage 2007: 63), adaptive co-management (ACM) can be seen as a novel governance approach to social-ecological systems, which emphasizes power sharing, flexibility, and experimentation and is positioned at the confluence of

social learning and collaboration (Plummer and FitzGibbon 2007; Resilience Alliance 2007; Armitage et al 2008). Although social learning is increasingly acknowledged and adopted for its utility, its ambiguity and a consequent need for conceptual clarity and consistent application in REM research are also well recognized (Parson and Clark 1995; Maarleveld and Dangbegnon 1999; Plummer and Fitzgibbon 2007; Armitage et al 2008).

Researchers identify two main perspectives on social learning (Pahl-Wostl and Hare 2004; Parson and Clark 1995; Webler et al 1995). 1) The *psychological* perspective focuses on individual learning processes as dependent upon social interaction, observation, and imitation (i.e., Bandura 1977). This perspective is too narrow to account for all the learning processes linked to REM (Pahl-Wostl and Hare 2004). 2) The *sociological* perspective is concerned with learning processes within social groups (e.g., project groups, public planning workshops, private and public bureaucracies) and societies (e.g., Argyris and Schön 1978; Wynne 1992). The sociological approach transcends socially conditioned learning by individuals to look at "coordinated cognitive and normative adjustment" (McCarthy 2006) or group-level behavioural and moral change. The latter approach provides the main theoretical foundation for social learning in REM research and my research.

Key articles on social learning in REM show variation regarding definition (e.g., Webler et al 1995; Daniels and Walker 1996a, Glasbergen 1996; Schusler et al 2003). Ambiguity remains as to who is learning, whether individuals or groups, and in what forum. It is also unclear which actors are involved and whose interests are represented in terms of lay people, civil society organizations, governments, scientists, and policy makers. Some see social learning as a citizen-centered public process (e.g., Webler et al 1995; Daniels and Walker 1996a), while others limit social learning to government policy makers and "well-organized" active interest groups (Glasbergen 1996: 177). Keen et al (2005) do not limit learning to either civilians or closed policy networks.

Scholars of social learning in REM often conceptualize learning based on an idealistic view of direct and broad citizen involvement in democracy, but conduct their research in the complex political reality of 'indirect' citizen involvement based on limited representative multi-stakeholder policy forums and public participation processes in developed regions. Most studies

evaluate participatory processes sponsored by government or industry, such as environmental assessment (e.g., Webler et al 1995; Diduck and Mitchell 2003; Fitzpatrick and Sinclair 2003; Fitzpatrick 2006) or forms of collaborative management (Diduck et al 2005). Others stage participatory workshops and "search conferences" to promote involvement and collaboration among stakeholders through learning activities for a certain purpose (plan development, conflict resolution) and to evaluate learning processes and outcomes (e.g., Webler et al 1995; Daniels and Walker 1996a, 1996b; Schusler et al 2003; Pahl-Wostl and Hare 2004; Tippet et al 2005; McCarthy et al 2006). Some (e.g., Dale 1989; Gray 2003) take a broad view of how perspectives change among multiple parties both engaged in and "outside" of environmental debates.

Diduck (2010) addressed these concerns by delineating different social units of learning (individual, action group, organizational, network, and societal learning). Diduck's (2010: 4) analysis supports the need for clarity when delineating learning participants and processes to recognize "the untidy mesh of relationships, acting across all levels simultaneously" in multi-level learning. Ongoing fuzzy articulations of social learning in the REM literature, when considered alongside the emphasis placed on social learning to solving environmental problems, contributes to what has been referred to as the "learning paradox" (Armitage et al 2008).

In spite of diversity, common elements (Table 3.3) from seminal social learning scholarship can be synthesized to formulate a more complete definition for social learning:

> an ongoing and interactive process in which individuals and groups with diverse values and knowledge negotiate and reflect on experience to develop shared meaning as well as appreciation for their interdependence to resolve common problems through social change.

This definition is generic to account for various potential participants, forums, and dynamic interactions, and specific enough to identify the purpose of social learning in REM.

As outlined in Chapter 4, this research seeks to take a broader and more long-term view of social learning processes [i.e., rather than focussing on ephemeral learning platforms (e.g., conferences, Schusler et al 2003; public participation sessions, Daniels and Walker 1996a] to account for nested learning processes at both the organizational and organizational network levels (Diduck 2010). This approach works well with the embedded case study method (Yin

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2003) adopted here to investigate social framings in the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation and wider Northeast Superior Region it claims to represent. Social framings, their relevance to learning modes and processes, and the importance of power relations in multi-actor forums are further explained below.

Table 3.3. Common definitional elements of social learning in REM

Common Elements	Key Sources
Learning by individuals and groups [private, public, civic]	Friedmann 1987; Daniels and Walker 1996a; Schusler et al 2003; Keen et al 2005; Wildemeerisch 2007
Working on common problem(s)	Webler et al 1995; Keen et al 2005
Interactive, ongoing, social process	Argyris and Schön 1978; Friedmann 1987; Daniels and Walker 1996a; Schusler et al 2003; Keen et al 2005
Deliberating and negotiating	Daniels and Walker 1996a; Keen et al 2005; Wildemeerisch 2007
Combining diverse perspectives, experiences, values, and knowledge	Daniels and Walker 1996a; Schusler et al 2003; Keen et al 2005
Developing mutual understanding [framework for constructing meaning] to guide joint action	Webler et al 1995; Daniels and Walker 1996a; Schusler et al 2003
Reflecting on action/experience	Keen et al 2005; Wildemeerisch 2007
Recognising interconnections and interdependence	Webler et al 1995; Daniels and Walker 1996a; Keen et al 2005
Seeking change in social behaviour/practice	Webler et al 1995; Keen et al 2005

3.4. Social Framings, Multi-loop Learning, and Power Relations: A Conceptual Framework

3.4.1. Frames, Social Framings and Discourses

As defined by Miles and Huberman (1994: 18), "a conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied—the key factors, constructs or variables—and the presumed relationships among them." The conceptual framework for my research draws on concepts from the work of Gray (1989; 2003) on collaboration and frame analysis and organizational learning theory (Argyris and Schön 1978) from the field of organizational development. Political ecology (Peet and Watts 1996; Forsyth 2003; Dryzek

2005) is also instructive for considering social framings of problems resulting from human-environment interactions and the construction of knowledge in REM settings. Together, this framework conceptualizes how power relations affect learning processes and outcomes in complex problem domains. Key concepts and their relationships are described below as a guide for this study.

Social learning theories have been influenced by John Dewey's (1859-1952) philosophical pragmatism and the concept of "learning by doing" (Friedmann 1987: 188). His epistemology was constructivist, guided by the belief that knowledge derives from experience and that through action people transform the world and simultaneously develop understanding by imposing meaning on individual experience. A constructivist approach to social learning (e.g., Argyris and Schön 1978; Mezirow 1994; Keen et al 2005) requires attention to how people build shared meaning through socially constructing common "frames"—the cognitive structures that enable people to interpret experience—which provide the basis for collective action (e.g., Argyris and Schön 1978; Schusler et al 2003; Gray 2004).

According to Gray (2003: 13), "a frame provides a heuristic for how to categorize and organize data into meaningful chunks of information." Frames guide our perception and how we represent reality (Figure 3.1). "Reality" is always interpreted and filtered through the human senses and so there are multiple, often competing, realities. When two or more people hold the same frame(s) regarding a situation, they are said to be socially constructing reality.

Sets of related social framings of environmental issues or problems constitute larger discourses or "shared way[s] of apprehending the world" (Dryzek 2005: 9). It is within the confines of a particular discourse that subscribers find the "basic terms" (i.e., assumptions, judgements) that position investigation, viewpoints, agreements and disagreements (Dryzek 2005: 9). Individuals and groups of people sponsor discourses that in turn lead them to "frame" situations in a certain way. Discourses include social framings that set out problem definitions and solutions—and indeed a range of related frames—that together portray a particular story or account of a situation. Knowledge must therefore be considered in the context of the human-environment interactions (and the related discourse) in which it was produced. Reality is interpreted and social framings both emphasize and omit information.

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Figure 3.1. Relationship among frames, social framings, and discourses.
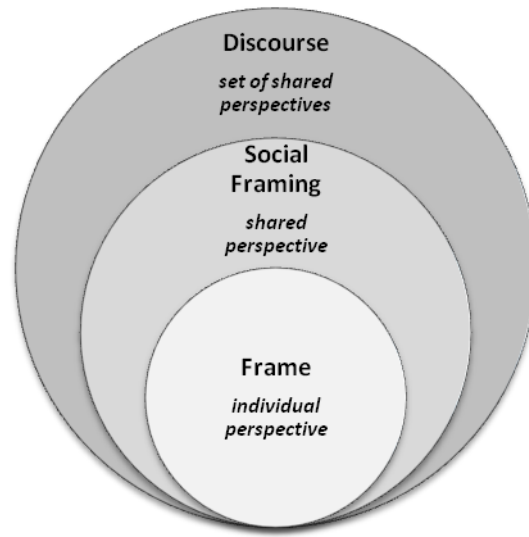
Following Goffman's (1974) pioneering *Frame Analysis[2]*, several literatures (e.g., political science, planning, adult education, organizational development, political ecology) offer a version of the frame concept. Each of these concepts places importance on individual and group perception in human-environment interactions related to learning and knowledge generation in REM (Table 3.4). Geographers in particular have used behavioural approaches for analysis in REM to study human attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours (Mitchell 1989). But as Mitchell (1989: 102) points out, such "subjective geographical concepts" can be a source of confusion, require operational definitions, and are usually accessed through observing behaviour and listening to people. The frame concept and discourse analysis, when linked to a social learning process model that describes relationships among frames, actions, and outcomes, provide a way to analyze peoples' perspectives on common issues, and resultant behaviour.

Frames are subject to slightly different research questions in collaboration, social learning, and political ecology (Table 3.5). In political ecology, frames are linked to the political economy of environmental knowledge construction and discourse and to the "apparatuses" for

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[2] Chapter 4 outlines relevant frame analysis methods.

Table 3.4. Parallel frame concepts linking perception and meaning at individual and group scales

Concept	Description	Literature
Frames Gray 2003	"We all use frames to make sense of the world around us. A frame provides a heuristic for how to categorize and organize data into meaningful chunks of information [and interpret experience]" (13).	Collaborative REM
Frames of reference Mezirow 1991	Consist of 1) a learner's *meaning perspective* or *way of looking at the world*, and 2) *meaning scheme* or way of interpreting the world based on our sense experience.	Adult Education/ Social learning
Mental models Kim 1993; Senge 1994 in Mitchell 2002	"engrained assumptions, generalizations and images that influence how individuals see the world and what action is to be taken" (131)	Organizational development/ Learning Organizations
Theory of reality Friedmann 1987	Consists of a *theory of history* or actor's worldview, and *theory of situation* or actor's understanding of the current situation	Planning
Common framework of understanding Schusler et al 2003	Shared diverse perspectives and experience as a basis for joint action.	Social learning in Collaborative REM
Theories-of-action/Theory-in-use Argyris and Schön 1978	Espoused and tacit theories-in-use consist of multiple "images" [frames] stored in organizational memory comprising public maps and private images.	Organizational learning
Frames and social framings Forsyth 2003	"The local perception or evaluation of environmental changes may be referred to as 'framings'. This term refers to the principles and assumptions underlying political debate and action" (77).	Political Ecology
Regime of Articulation Escobar 1999	"…regimes are thus the subject of tensions and contestations; biophysical laws, meanings, labor, knowledge, and identities are important, although with diverging intensities and configurations, in all of them. The regimes represent actual or potential apparatuses for the production of the social and the biological" (5).	Political Ecology
Environmental Imaginaries Peet and Watts 1996	"…whole complexes of [region-derived] imaginaries, with which people think, discuss, and contend threats to their livelihoods (37).	Political Ecology

knowledge production involving high-level influences from epistemic communities, dominant ideologies, and dispersed, often global, interests (Escobar 1999; Forsyth 2003; Dryzek 2005). Political ecologists also use the frame concept with reference to the social construction of nature and localized human-environment interactions affecting livelihoods (Peet and Watts 1996). In the REM and social learning literatures, frames are usually analyzed at the individual and small group levels of scale with a view to understanding how shared meaning and narratives are

generated through social interaction (e.g., deliberation and negotiation in the sense of Gray 1989; 2003; 2004; Dewulf et al 2005; Keen et al 2005). Others are more concerned with how environmental problems and policy controversies are represented at the network or societal level of scale (e.g., Dale 1989).

Table 3.5. Example questions related to frames and discourse in collaboration, social learning and political ecology literature.

Literature	Key questions
Collaboration	• What range of frames do stakeholders hold? • Which frames create agreement/conflict?
Social Learning	• What are the process components, structure, and functions that promote individual and group learning? • What are the learning outcomes?
Political Ecology	• How are frames constructed, by whom, and when? • How does context influence social framings and how does that influence society-environmental interactions?

(e.g., Lewicki et al 2003; Diduck and Mitchell 2003; Schusler et al 2003; Escobar and Paulson 2005; Robbins 2006)

Researchers from different backgrounds have employed discourse analysis techniques to examine the frames used to construct knowledge in situations of conflict and domination (e.g., Zimmerer 1996; Gray 2003; 2004; Forsyth 2003; Dryzek 2005). Informed by Benford and Snow's (1990) work on the importance of framing for collective mobilization and social movements, Gray's (2003) systematic approach to frame analysis classifies different frames used in situations of intractable conflict to identify the self and others, describe powerful actors, and define problems and appropriate solutions. My research will employ Gray's (2003) method for data collection, analysis and presentation, as specified in Chapter 4.

Informed by the above approaches, my research views social framings as politically motivated perspectives generated through REM struggles mediated by different forms of power (Forsyth 2003; Gray 2003; Dryzek 2005) (Figure 3.2). As part of its original and significant conceptual contribution, my research also advances the notion that social learning approaches implicitly study the convergence (or divergence) of individual frames and how social framings are developed through collective "framing" and "reframing" (see Gray 2004; 2003) (Figure 3.2). A small group of researchers is now linking reframing and social learning (Dale 1989; Bouwen

and Taillieu 2004; Pahl-Wostl and Hare 2004; Tippet et al 2005; Pahl-Wostl 2009), recognizing that these concepts overlap and are complementary. Dale (1989) appears to have been the first to make the link between social learning and frame analysis in an environmental management context, yet this paper is rarely cited. A social learning perspective helps to link social framings to a social process and provides a model to understand how frames and reframing are linked to debate, power relations, and actions in problem settings. These connections are further explained below.

3.4.2. Multi-loop Learning and 'Reframing'

Scholars following the sociological approach to social learning agree that research must consider the interplay between the individual and collective learning to account for human agency within larger social structures and to link learning at individual and social scales (i.e., to recognize the roles and actions of individuals that, when taken together, are an expression of the larger organizations they form) (Argyris and Schön 1978; Kim 1993; Diduck et al 2005; Fazey et al 2005). Given its focus on group learning and interpersonal dynamics, organizational learning theory prevails in REM research and is central to the conceptual framework for this research (Figure 3.2). In particular, the framework draws on Argyris and Schön's (1978: 14) seminal *Theory of Action Framework* and Kim's (1993) *Integrated Model of Organizational Learning* which clarifies and develops concepts from the former.

Social learning theorists (Argyris and Schön 1978; Kim 1993) distinguish between two main modes of learning (Figure 3.2). Single-loop learning (SLL) is "concerned with changing skills, practices, and actions" that affect outcomes (Keen et al 2005: 16). This supports ongoing pursuit of current organizational policies and objectives without changing basic values and norms (Argyris and Schön 1978; Diduck et al 2005). Double-loop learning (DLL) results in fundamental changes to underlying values, norms, and objectives that in turn cause change in strategies and action. Kim (1993) highlights this difference between using "know-how" and "know-why" to influence the two aspects of "mental models" that guide action: 1) procedural routines and 2) common frameworks—the latter being conceptually analogous to the concept of a social framing (Gray 2003, 2004; Pahl-Wostl 2009). The terms 'social framing', 'collective frames' or 'common frames' and 'frameworks' are used interchangeably herein to refer to

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frames held by groups of individuals. Altering frameworks through DLL expands frameworks
and enables the 'reframing' of problems in order to establish new routines for action.
Importantly, collaboration and DLL are considered necessary to produce new common
frameworks (social framings), actions, and outcomes needed to facilitate transition during times
of turbulence and crisis (Gray 1989, 2003; Pahl-Wostl 2009).

Figure 3.2. Conceptual Framework for Research on Power Relations and Social Learning
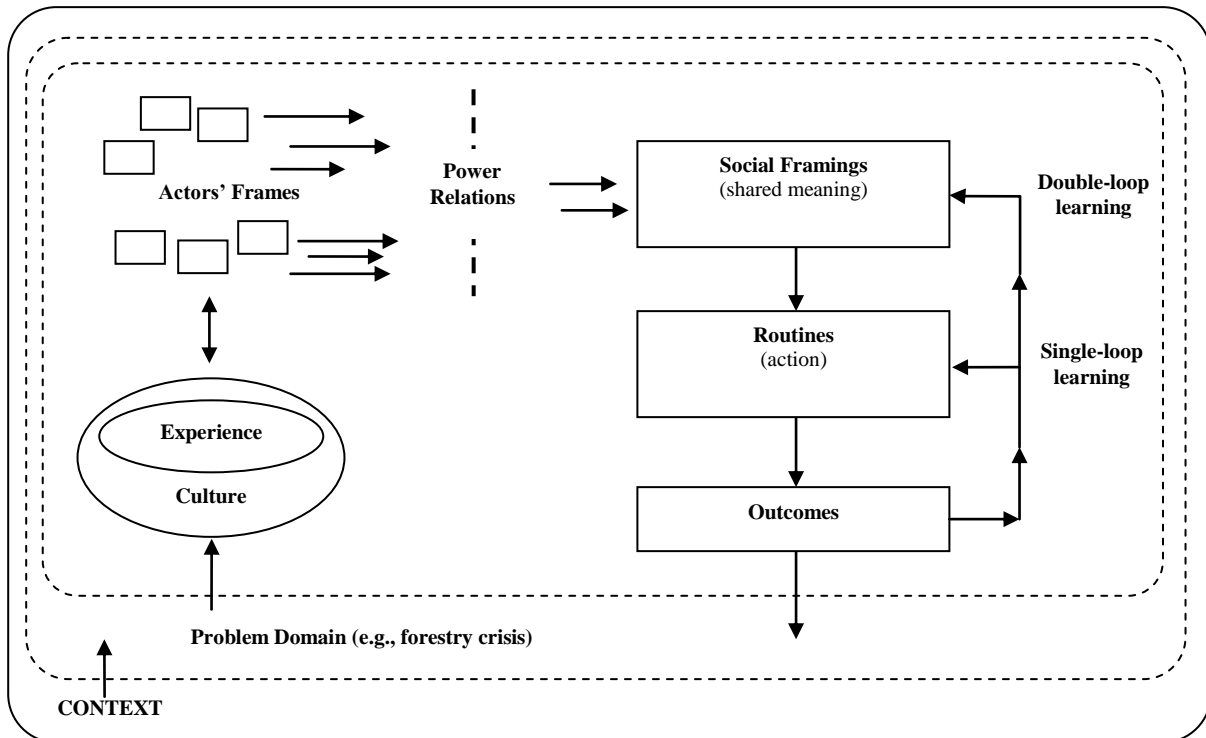
(based on Argyris and Schön 1978; Gray 1989, 2003; Kim 1993; Raik et al 2008)

Following Argyris and Schön's (1978) foundational work, management and
organizational development theorists (e.g., Flood and Romm 1996) added the notion of triple-
loop learning, which is intended as a refinement of double-loop learning. Triple-loop learning is
not well-defined and seeks to separate learning modes that involve reflection on cause-and-effect
assumptions, goals and objectives, from critical reflection on dominant governing values (Pahl-
Wostl 2009). I have elected to use the original model of double-loop learning (Argyris and
Schön's 1978), which links reflection on values, goals and assumptions as part of the same
process of framing and reframing that influences meaning making in organizations. Argyris and

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Schön's (1978) work provides a straightforward and inclusive model with demonstrated utility in REM research (e.g., Diduck et al 2005), and is directly amenable to framing theory.

Learning advances through social interaction as people continually co-construct their individual frames in relation to those shared among the collective. Since "organizations do not literally remember, think, and learn", collective learning only occurs as individuals encode what they have learned in collective memory (Argyris and Schön 1978: 11). The organization worldview slowly changes as the thinking of its members is exchanged and absorbed, and shared meaning drives action (Kim 1993). Social learning therefore requires structures for information sharing, interpretation and storage (for collective memory) (FitzPatrick 2006). Mental models and public maps (e.g., reports, policies, legislation, regulations, bylaws, manuals, informal rules) are the media of collective memory that hold common frames (Argyris and Schön 1978; Diduck et al 2005). As discussed in Chapter 4, discourse analysis techniques (i.e., Gray 2003) can be used to reveal different frames embedded in various verbal and written communications, such as interview transcripts, policy documents and reports, and newspaper articles covering key events.

Social framings "define what an organization pays attention to, how it chooses to act, and what it chooses to remember from its experience" (Kim 1993: 44). Social framings and routines together represent an organizational guide for action, which shapes and is shaped by experience and culture, and influences perception and awareness (Argyris and Schön 1978; Kim 1993). Thus, social learning processes involve the convergence and synthesis of *individual frames* for collectively generated *social framings*, which in turn produce shared meaning and understanding as the basis for action (see Argyris and Schön 1978; Schusler et al 2003; Gray 2004). Building shared understanding and values among stakeholders helps bolster capacity to deal with turbulence in problem domains by creating a mutual willingness to act on agreed problem definitions and the course for action (Gray 1989; Kim 1993). Following this model, social framings shape how people depict problem situations, what is emphasized, downplayed, omitted, or silenced and which solutions and actions are preferred and deemed possible.

Through social interaction there is potential for frame conflicts as competing individuals and organizations try to or do assert their dominance, which can create dysfunction. This is not to say that disagreement is always 'bad'. When conflict is viewed constructively it can indicate

process or procedural flaws and turn attention to marginalized perspectives (Mitchell 2002). Indeed, this is what interest groups do when they struggle to cause decision makers to reframe issues of concern and change associated policies that drive action. Social learning scholars see deliberation and negotiation as important aspects of democratic public participation and decision making (Keen et al 2005).

However, if collaborators cannot, or will not, socially construct shared meaning, social learning cannot be realized (i.e., social framings are not constructed). Those with influence can affect what others, and therefore an organization or society, learn in terms of what frames are adopted to represent reality. Competing discourses embody different social framings of problems and solutions that shape and are shaped by different knowledge, experience and culture. What and whose perspectives prevail, and the differential influence of actors in complex problem domains, are central concerns for this research.

3.4.3. Forms of Power and Social Framings in Complex Problem Domains

Scholars have stressed the need for more attention to the influence of power relations, including the forms and sources of power in REM and social learning (Sinclair and Diduck 2001; Keen and Mahanty 2006; Wildemeersch 2007; Armitage et al 2008; Raik et al 2008). Some consider how planning and management process design, structure and function can contribute to forums, techniques, "new" knowledge, and decisions that can recreate hegemonic power relations (Maarleveld and Dangbegnon 1999; Schusler et al 2003; Quaghebeur et al 2004). For example, development-oriented, government- or donor-designed social learning processes can be problematic when they shape or complicate power relations, or ignore local needs and desires (Quaghebeur et al 2004; Keen et al 2005; Armitage et al 2008). How resource system boundaries are defined can influence the identification of legitimate stakeholders, and exclude certain people and knowledge based on location, age, gender, race, professional (non)affiliation, and time (i.e., generations) (Maarleveld and Dangbegnon 1999; Mitchell 2002). Limiting problem definitions, dissent, participation and conflict, as well as opportunities for stakeholder discussion and reflection needed for learning, are examples of how powerful actors intervene (Maarleveld and Dangbegnon 1999; Sinclair and Diduck 2001; Diduck and Mitchell 2003; Quaghebeur et al 2004). Attention must be paid to the embeddedness of learning and decision

making processes within political and institutional contexts, and how political economy influences learning processes and REM outcomes at the local scale (Glasbergen 1996; Diduck et al 2005; Wildemeersch 2007).

Political ecology offers a lens for viewing power relations and how social framings are constructed in complex REM problem domains and collaborative forums. Recent political ecology provides detailed understandings of how social and cultural identities and power relations influence human-environment interactions (Bryant 1998; Paulson et al 2003). In particular, a central theme in critical political ecology is pluralism of perspectives on environmental issues and how social, cultural, political, and economic contextual influences shape perceptions, meanings, science and discourses that in turn affect practices and outcomes (Peet and Watts 1996; Escobar 1999; Forsyth 2003). Struggle in this sense is as much about dominant ways of making meaning as it is about institutional control or material needs (Peet and Watts 1996). As summarized by Forsyth (2003: 81-85):

> In effect, exploring social framings means questioning how, when, and by whom such terms were developed as a substitute for reality.... A "critical" political ecology seeks to indicate how far explanations of environmental problems reflect – or fail to reflect – the perspectives of different social groups. [This requires] questioning existing definitions of environmental problems (problem closure); the linguistic basis of science and reference; and the problem in identifying, communicating, or empowering the perspectives arising from different social groupings.

Congruent with the "new" political ecology, researchers are illustrating how civil society organizations, governments, scientists and consultants, Aboriginal peoples, and other resource users are involved in local struggles for control over environmental knowledge and the ideologies and visions that will be imposed through resource management institutions (e.g., Reed and McIlveen 2006; Rikoon 2006; Robbins 2006; Dengler 2007; Reed 2007; Bullock et al 2009).

Informed by the work of Paulson et al (2003), power relations can be conceptualized as a set of social relations that shape and are shaped by human interactions within which agents exercise different sources of power to cause change, both intentionally and unintentionally, for certain outcomes. The uneven distribution of risks and benefits associated with actions and outcomes works to drive political processes. With respect to forest governance settings involving multiple actors, power relations enable and constrain the flow of power between and

among actors as they negotiate diverse needs, wants, and meanings. In social learning forums in which constructed meanings embody certain values and interests, power relations can work as a filter to propagate the frames of power actors, while excluding others.

Operational definitions for the different *forms* and *sources* of power at work in REM assist in examining how power relations influence social framings and reframing of Northern Ontario's "forestry crisis". My research draws on notions of power from recent works in REM (Gray 2003; Raik et al 2008). Raik et al (2008: 730) point out that the concept of power, as it is commonly used in natural resource management research, is a nuanced concept with hidden implications for practice, rather than an idea that is obvious and "inherently understandable". Based on Raik et al's (2008) analysis, two main *forms* of power are portrayed: *agent-centred* and *structural*. The *agent-centered* view explains power on the basis of coercion and constraint, or the ability of one actor to either cause certain behaviours or limit certain behaviours in another. Coercive power can be exercised to force or coax actors to do things they do not want to do. Constraining power works to limit action through, for example, limiting discourse or dialogue to prevent what *could* happen and "ensure inaction on issues" (Raik et al 2008, 733). The *structural* view "understands power as forces above and external to the individual (e.g., race, gender, class) that can operate unacknowledged to influence people and their behavior" (Raik et al 2008, 734). To Raik et al (2008, 734) social structures embody certain interests while excluding others. Thus, power is commonly conceived as a force possessed and exercised by individual actors in social settings and one that infuses the social structures that link and affect the behaviour of individuals. Both are germane to studying how power affects learning in the NSFC as a response to crisis.

Gray (2003) identifies several sources of power in environmental conflict settings (Table 3.6). This typology will be used to analyze the *sources* of power in the NSFC and Northeast Superior Region. My research posits that a discourse analysis approach to social framings is not only amenable to exploring how different people and groups frame and reframe the forestry crisis in Northern Ontario, but is also useful for viewing how power works to advance certain frames over others, as well as how social framings, in turn, affect views and actions. Methods

for qualitative analysis, including how these typologies will guide data analysis, are presented in Chapter 4.

Table 3.6. Typology of power sources in environmental conflict settings

Sources of power	Definition
Authority/positional	Actual ability to make decisions based on formal role, job title/ description, organizational position
Resources	Have power because of resources (e.g., time, money, support staff) that others do not possess
Expertise	Possess relevant and unique knowledge that others do not have
Personal	Individual interpersonal style (e.g., charisma, competent communication skills, etc.) that grants credibility and influence
Coalition/relational	Membership in and/or affiliation with group of people who support individual's perspective (strength in numbers)
Force/threat	Actual or threat of coercive action
Moral/righteous	Position is on the "moral high ground" or belief that one is ethically or morally "right"
Sympathy/vulnerability	Victim role that garners support from others on an emotional level

(adapted from Gray 2003)

3.5. Summary

This chapter examined concepts and methods from the collaboration, social learning, and political ecology literatures relevant to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. In particular, I connected key aspects of the emerging conceptual framework that guide my research on how power relations influence social learning in multiparty problem domains. I showed how Argyris and Schön's (1978) single- and double-loop organizational learning model could be usefully linked to social framing theories from the environmental conflict and collaboration literatures (Dale 1989; Rein and Schön 1994; Gray 2003) and political ecology literature (Forsyth 2003; Raik et al 2008) to provide an expanded and more contextualized view of social learning processes amidst power relations. As demonstrated in Chapters 6 and 7, the framework has been designed to enable systematic analysis of the different sources and forms of power that shape framing and reframing processes among different actors as well as the social framings that emerge as dominant to guide action and outcomes in multiparty problem settings.

In Chapters 6 and 7, the framework will be applied at both the organizational network and organizational level (Diduck 2010) to assess social framings of the 'forestry crisis' and power relations among various actors in the Northeast Superior Region and a nascent collaborative organization formed in response to the crisis—the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation. The next chapter (4) presents the research design and discusses the evolution of the research process, as well as the methods for data collection and analysis employed.

CHAPTER 4 – RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1. Research Approach

Research design is guided by a researcher's paradigm, which establishes "epistemological, ontological and methodological premises" that structure inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln 2003: 33). The researcher's paradigm reflects beliefs and assumptions about the nature of reality, knowledge and truth, and suitable procedures for examination. A basic distinction identifies two general 'camps' with respect to research tradition (Guba 1990; Denzin and Lincoln 2003). 1) Positivists believe there is one physical and external reality which objective researchers can come to know through empirical observation. The scientific method and quantitative methods and data are central to this traditionally dominant approach. 2) Alternatively, constructivists maintain there are multiple realities in that knowledge is relative to the people and contexts from which it was produced. Researchers in the latter tradition tend to use qualitative modes of inquiry and data collected from interviews and participant observation to enable interpretation of the lived experiences of participants, where the researcher is viewed as a participant in the research. In contrast to positivist field work which seeks to objectively measure isolated variables in an external reality, the qualitative approach often involves field work during which the researcher attempts to gain a "holistic overview" of the context and perceptions of local actors "from the inside" (Miles and Huberman 1994: 6). There are additional (e.g., critical sciences) and hybrid approaches that meld aspects of these and other positions (see for example Johnson 1991, Patton 2002, Creswell 2003, Denzin and Lincoln 2003 for nuanced comparisons).

Debate between quantitative and qualitative supporters about whose way is 'better' indicates not only disagreement but competition between paradigms (Miles and Huberman 1994; Denzin and Lincoln 2003). Interdisciplinary researchers see the benefit and need for mixed approaches to inquiry, recognizing different approaches are suited to answering certain kinds of questions (e.g., the development of in-depth and detailed understanding of cases versus generalizing from a sample to a population) (Patton 2002; Creswell 2003). As Miles and Huberman (1994: 40) point out: "numbers and words are *both* needed if we are to understand the world". To them, more productive questions are whether different methods and data should be linked, how this will be done and for what (or whose) purposes? Creswell (2003: 12) aligns

mixed methods research with a third paradigm, pragmatism, given a shared focus on the *research problem* as a starting point rather than methods. The focus on the problem enables researchers to freely combine methods and data "to provide the best understanding of a research problem" at a particular time and place.

My research is informed by the constructivist and pragmatic paradigms. Through this research I seek to understand how people linked by a mutual problem interpret experience in the context of uneven power relations. Informed by social learning (e.g., Argyris and Schön 1978; Keen et al 2005) and framing theory (Gray 2003; Forsyth 2003), my research primarily engages the constructivist view that people generate meaning through an ongoing and interactive social process of co-constructing reality. The constructivist view holds that people's subjective meanings are socially reproduced through historical and cultural norms that shape life and work in specific settings (Creswell 2003).

However, in keeping with an inductive research mode (Miles and Huberman 1994) data collection and analysis methods were later expanded to include a survey, in order to establish a community-based component that was problem-oriented. The addition of the survey added a quantitative perspective (i.e., descriptive statistics at nominal and ordinal levels of measurement) also relevant to the guiding research questions. Hence, my research evolved into a mixed methods study (Creswell 2003) to accommodate the expressed information needs of the partnering organization, the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation. The ability to combine different types of data and collection methods helped to develop a more complete understanding of the research problem and context. The flexibility of a case study strategy (discussed below) was beneficial to accommodate an evolving dataset and make use of various data types and sources to develop a detailed analysis (Stake 2003; Yin 2003; Pierce 2008).

Constructivist and pragmatic approaches openly acknowledge that research and knowledge are embedded in specific political, social and historical contexts and so each can turn a critical eye to political motivations in society and research (Creswell 2003). Accordingly, I apply a critical lens through my analysis in that I seek to understand the values and politics that underlie dominant and marginalized social framings in forest governance in Ontario. Particulars on how data were collected and analyzed are presented below.

4.2. Research Process

4.2.1. Scoping the Research

This research builds on my MES thesis on community forest implementation, which furthered my interest in what I then understood as 'human organization' in environmental policy conflicts. That research (Bullock 2006; Bullock et al 2009) indicated a need to study learning in emerging collaborations, that is, the local, informal, antecedents of broader social movements. In particular, I was interested in how actors shared their experiences and acted based on newly adopted perspectives, interests, values and identities. This provided the general topic as a starting point for the current research (Figure 4.1).

Based on advice from my doctoral committee, and through course work and comprehensive examination preparations, I read broadly but with a focus on the collaboration, social learning and political ecology literature between October 2006 and November 2007. I also began a concurrent search for potential case studies. As Pierce (2008) observes, conducting 'research' about potential research case(s) is crucial to effective case study research. Scoping research conducted prior to choosing the preferred case was important to verifying *self-containment* and *typicality* (Pierce 2008: 52). A case satisfies self-containment when it noticeably contains the variables of central interest to the research. Typicality refers to the presence of qualifying similarities among the potential range of cases. Conscious case selection should also consider whether access to key people and data will be possible, and whether there is willingness among potential participants to be involved (Pierce 2008).

Accordingly, I explored the internet and literature for potential case studies, presuming that timing would be a challenge for site selection, given my interest in studying an emerging organization. It was also important to find a community-based forest group with momentum that would be receptive to an outside researcher. In October 2006, I learned about Natural Resources Canada's plans for the Forest Communities Program while attending the Canadian Institute of Forestry annual meeting in Cochrane, Northern Ontario. I monitored the progress of that program via the internet and one year later established contact with a group of municipal leaders, the Northeast Superior Mayor's Group, who were awarded a Forest Communities Program site and were forming a new collaborative organization. Thus, systematic preparation, serendipity

Figure 4.1. The Research Process

Previous Graduate Research & Experience	General Topic	Literature Review	Define/Refine Research Questions

Provisional Conceptual Framework

Methods

Partner with NSFC

CASE STUDY

Embedded Unit of Analysis

Analysis

Results

Conclusions & Recommendations

Share Findings:
*publishing
presentations
teaching*
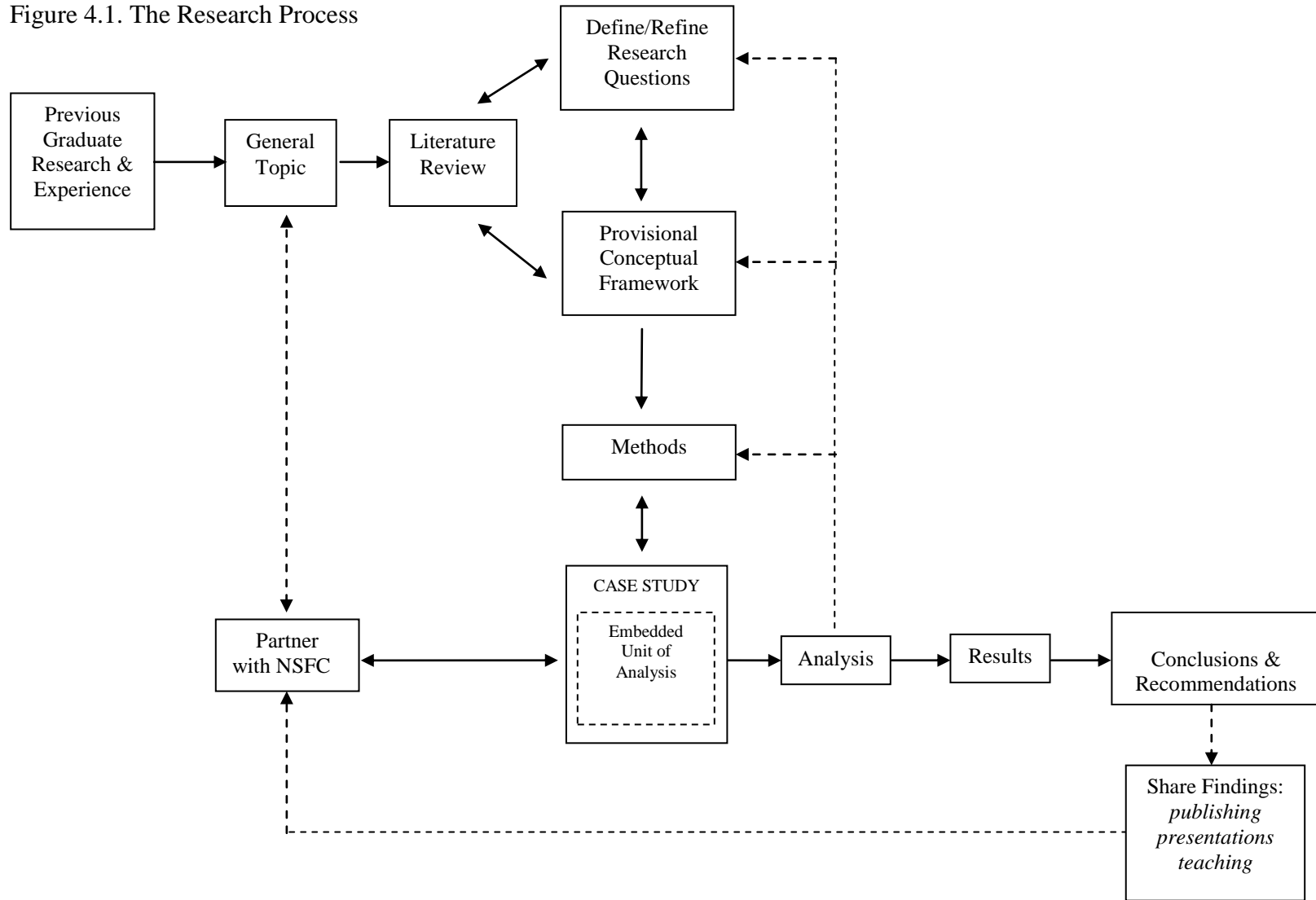
and a research gap, guided site selection. The Northeast Superior case directly influenced the research design from that point onward.

The literature review, research questions and conceptual framework for the study were developed simultaneously through an ongoing process of exploration and refinement. Setting out the research questions, scoping the preferred case, and developing the provisional conceptual framework were also important to identifying the appropriate methods for the study. In this way it was my interest in a particular *case* that specified the choice of methods, rather than the other way around (Stake 2003; Luck et al 2006).

A *case study* is the process of comprehensive and systematic data collection and analysis about a particular *case* as well as the final research product (Patton 2002). A case study research strategy was useful because of my interest in contemporary phenomena that could not be examined in isolation from context (i.e., examine how a nascent organization had emerged and how it was evolving relative to contextual influences) (Yin 2003). Case studies are frequently equated with research that is in-depth, intensive and longer-term, which produces rich, case-specific knowledge about certain phenomena in particular contexts (Lee 1999; Patton 2002; Luck et al 2006; Tharenou et al 2007; Pierce 2008; Liamputtong 2009). Case studies are often used in organizational research to study social processes of change in organizations and include historic, longitudinal and contextual analyses of processes, events and outcomes (Lee 1999; Tharenou et al 2007).

4.2.2. Single-Case Study Research Design

Yin (2003: 41-42) provides two relevant rationales for conducting single-case study research: first, when a case is considered 'typical' in order to "capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation." The lessons derived from such case studies are thought to be informative about the experiences of common phenomena. The Northeast Superior Region and NSFC provide an ideal case to examine how power relations influence social learning processes and outcomes at a formative stage in an emerging collaboration. This case also typifies a Canadian extractive resource hinterland consisting of several small resource-based and First Nations communities and interest groups and traditionally dominant actors from industry

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and government which often exert influence from 'outside'. The broader movement for increased local control of forest resources in Northern Ontario juxtaposes potential collaborators as dominant and marginalized actors who have had uneven opportunities to steer forest development and decision making. A mix of experts, consultants, practitioners and lay people provides further opportunity to assess power differentials.

Second, single-case studies are appropriate for the longitudinal case in which the same case is studied at two or more points in time (Yin 2003). There is a need for longitudinal research on social learning and evolving social framings at the social organizational scale (Kim 1993; Gray 2003). Given the timing of this research and the early developmental stage of the NSFC and the Forest Communities Program, it was appropriate to initiate a longitudinal research program to study framing and learning processes involving an emerging set of organizational actors. The research draws on participant data from three periods in time:

- the recent past, based on participants' memory and documents,
- the first round of fieldwork (May-August 2008), and
- the second round of fieldwork, about one year later (May-June 2009).[3]

The current research is also intended to be the first phase of a longer study.

A single embedded case study design was also used to accommodate multiple units of analysis (Yin 2003). Specifically, embedded case study designs include nested units of analysis within the overall case study analysis. A strength of embedded case study designs is that different types of data and collection methods can be used at each unit of analysis, ranging from historical to survey analysis. Following the *concurrent procedure* for data collection associated with mixed method approaches enables the convergence of qualitative and quantitative data and integration of information into an overall impression of the case (Creswell 2003: 16). Drawing on multiple sources of evidence enables triangulation for factual corroboration, which is a major strength of case study research (Miles and Huberman 1994; Yin 2003). This mix of data and analysis can also support a well-developed understanding of the single case and help the

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[3] Pending successful completion of doctoral studies, postdoctoral research funding was approved (March 2010) which will support ongoing research with the organization and in the region.

researcher gain new insights by "turning ideas around" (Rossman and Wilson 1984,1991 cited in Miles and Huberman 1994: 41).

Setting the case boundaries is a common challenge for researchers studying events that may not have well-defined beginning and end points, and requires explicit rationale for bounding the chosen case (Liamputtong 2009; Yin 2003). As identified above, the Forest Communities Program site in the Northeast Superior Region is the collaborative forum of interest. However, due to its relatively short history as a formal organization and the narrow scope of involvement of relevant actors, it was important to investigate perspectives and events in the region that preceded the Natural Resources Canada project. As a result, it was helpful to interview people outside of the NSFC to include and compare different actors' (e.g., First Nations, municipal, provincial and federal government, industry, civil society organizations) perspectives on key forestry issues in the Northeast Superior Region and Northern Ontario in general. As a partner in the research, the NSFC requested and participated in the development of a survey intended to provide baseline information on perceptions of the tenure system (outlined below). This combination of data was also important for developing and understanding the case history and context.

There are two main units of analysis for this case study (Figure 4.2): 1) the wider group of public-private-civic actors in the Northeast Superior Region who are dealing with the forestry crisis as part of a multi-level governance system (the forest 'policy community') (Chapters 5 and 6), and 2) the Mayors Group and advisors within the NSFC (Chapter 7). An analysis of both groups was conducted to examine how the forestry crisis was collectively framed and to see which framings were emerging as dominant within the NSFC as a guide for action to 'learn the way out'. It was also reasonable to establish temporal boundaries for my analysis based on the period of the unfolding crisis, beginning with the 2001 Softwood Lumber Dispute flare-up until the provincial announcements for Ontario Crown tenure reform and ministerial reorganization (fall 2009).

Analyzing how different framings are constructed and how they converge/diverge with a single case study design is significant as results can help build the mutual understanding and shared meaning (of problems, solutions and of others) and collective capacity (Gray 1989) that

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some within the NSFC believe is necessary to move the region as a forest system into a more desirable and stable domain. Examining dominant social framings can also indicate whose desires are being acted upon and whose are being overlooked. Methods for data collection and analysis are outlined below.

Figure 4.2. Single-Case Study with Multiple Embedded Units of Analysis

CONTEXT

1. Northeast Superior Region
Interviews
Reports
Newspapers/magazines
Survey
Conferences/workshops
Photographs

2. NSFC
Interviews
Reports/proposals
Newspapers
Meetings
Letters
Site Visits
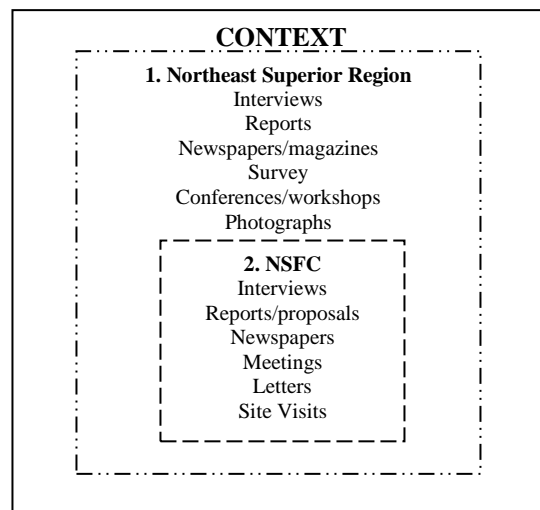
(adapted from Yin 2003)

4.2.3. Data Collection and Analysis in Social Framing and Social Learning Research

Frame analysis is an approach to studying communications between different actors (often oppositional) and has roots in the related areas of media and public policy analysis (e.g., Goffman 1974), the study of social movements (Benford and Snow 2000) and intractable environmental conflicts (e.g., Dale 1989; Gray 2003; 2004; Lewicki et al 2003; Dewulf et al 2004). Frame analysis (Rein and Schön 1994; Gray 2003) seeks to detect the tacit and explicit frames—and the underlying assumptions and values—that shape human perceptions and drive action, as well as how social framings change over time. Political ecology researchers also analyze discourse to examine the tacit frames used to construct meaning in situations of conflict and domination (Zimmerer 1996; Forsyth 2003; Dryzek 2005). Simply put, "frame analysis is

one analytical tool for sorting out many viewpoints and stances as the objects of inquiry" (Creed et al 2002: 38). As Creed et al (2002:38) summarize:

> Eliciting these frames from historical texts helps us understand the contesting interests, the deep logics beneath them, and how they were reflected in discourse and polemics at the time. Seeing which frames were advocated by whom and which ultimately dominated pushes deeper understanding about power, politics, and interests.

Guided by the theoretical perspectives contributing to the conceptual framework for this study (figure 3.2.), my research detects social learning by looking at the alignment (or divergence) of individual and organizational frames, and how they are constructed and change over time. A small group of researchers, mainly associated with the European HarmoniCOP (Harmonizing Collaborative Planning) project (i.e., Bouwen and Taillieu 2004; Pahl-Wostl and Hare 2004; Tippet et al 2005; Pahl-Wostl et al 2007), recognize potential for bridging concepts and methods for frame analysis in multi-party collaboration (e.g., Schön and Rein 1994; Lewicki 2003; Dewulf et al 2004; Gray 2004) and social learning theory (Argyris and Schön 1978; Kim 1993). Yet, both Gray (2003) and Kim (1993) point out that there have been few systematic research studies on frame changes in collaborative settings. Frame analysis has recently appeared in the literature on forest policy analysis in Canada (Ashton et al 2007). While Ashton et al's (2007) analysis is cursory and an isolated example, it shows that scholars concerned with the social aspects of forest management are acknowledging the untapped potential and value of this form of analysis. This research will address these gaps as part of its contribution to the literature.

Researchers (e.g., Dale 1989; Lewicki et al 2003; Dewulf et al 2004) identify frames by analyzing the perspectives reflected in spoken, written, or signed (e.g., physical gestures) language. Content analysis is used to examine various communications, such as interview transcripts, policy documents and reports, meeting minutes, websites, artwork and newspaper articles (Patton 2002). Content analysis involves the systematic analysis of qualitative data to identify patterns and themes for organizing and reporting data (Patton 2002). To illustrate, content analysis of interviews and documents in my research showed a *pattern* of participants expressing concern for the dominance of large forestry companies in their towns, and that the short-term interests of corporations were contrary to local concerns for long-term community

sustainability. Such patterns denote 'low local control' as a prominent *theme* associated with forestry towns in crisis.

Both inductive and deductive data coding procedures are often used for qualitative data analysis (Miles and Huberman 1994; Patton 2002). Qualitative researchers typically follow an inductive mode early on to discover possible patterns, themes and categories emerging from their data (Patton 2002). Inductive or open coding can be used to develop a framework of codes that can then be used to code subsequent data, in a deductive coding mode. An existing typology may also be used as a starting point for deductive coding.

My research uses a combination of deductive and inductive coding for data analysis (i.e., interviews and documents). In particular, I draw on Gray's (2003) typology of actor frames, which was developed through a multi-researcher (Lewicki et al 2003), multi-case temporal study of environmental conflicts (lasting years to decades). Gray's research team used content analysis to code various frames at the 'thought unit'—words, sentences, or paragraphs used to express discrete thoughts—and reviewed over 300 recorded interviews and 1600 newspaper articles, as well as a suite of internet sources, meetings, administrative records, video clips, and meeting minutes to develop and refine the typology. Gray's (2003) typology is systematic as she identifies different frames used in environmental problem domains to identity the self and characterise others, describe influential actors, diagnose problems, and identify perceived solutions. Gray's (2003) approach is amenable to my research and her typology provided the basis for interview questions and analysis of all qualitative data (Table 4.1).

A preliminary step in data analysis was to organize and prepare the different forms of data (Creswell 2003). All qualitative data collected (i.e., transcribed interviews, articles, observation, open-ended survey responses, research notes) were entered into a database created in QSR NVivo 7.0, a computer software program used to store, organize, present and analyze different data.

I employed an iterative coding approach that advanced from broad categories of codes based on Gray's (2003) typology (identity, characterisation, diagnostic, prognostic, power), to a

Table 4.1. Gray's (2003) Typology of Frames in Multi-stakeholder Environmental Conflicts

FRAME	DESCRIPTION	KEY QUESTIONS
Identity	People understand themselves belonging to certain social categories with particular characteristics, often formed in comparison and opposition to other groups. Identity frames are important because they are attached to characterisation and diagnostic frames. Conflict occurs when identity frames are challenged because they are linked to fundamental beliefs and values. Commonly based on five factors: demographics, location (place), role, institution, and interests.	How do respondents view themselves relative to the problem domain?
Characterisation	Understandings of others that "arise from the attribution of causality and blame that we make about our experiences and about what others have done to shape our experiences" (Gray 2003: 23). Often involve derogatory stereotypes. Can also be positive.	How does the respondent view others?
Diagnostic	Understanding of the problem situation and issues as well as what has caused the problem; often targeted at who is seen to be responsible for the problem.	How does the respondent define the problem and main issues?
Prognostic	What should be done to resolve the problem, including strategies and tactics for solving the problem and who ought to be responsible to act.	What does the respondent think should be done about the problem?
Agent-based Power	Power is gained in several ways: 1. authority/positional 2. resources 3. expertise 4. personality traits and interpersonal skills 5. coalition/relational 6. sympathy/vulnerability 7. force/threat 8. moral/righteous 9. having a voice at the table (forum)	Who is powerful and why?

more refined and nuanced system of linked themes and subthemes. I conducting a first reading of all transcripts and documents to get a "general impression" of the case data, making occasional notes about initial ideas (Creswell 2003: 191). I then conducted a second reading of interview and documents to code words, sentences and paragraphs of data according to Gray's (2003) broad frame categories. Subsequent readings enabled further classification based on descriptive wording adopted from actual texts. For example, a perspective that described the '*forest industry as powerful due to financial capital'* was coded simply as 'power' in the first pass, which was further recoded as:

➔ 'agent-based power';
   ➔ 'resources';
      ➔ 'industry';
         ➔ 'money'.

Five levels of classification commonly emerged using this technique, with some categories containing as many as 15 themes and 30 subthemes to account for the diversity of perspectives and actors involved.

Working back and forth between my coding scheme and dataset helped me to refine and rename codes and also consolidate and recode data as the analysis evolved (Patton 2002). This step of the analysis involved much selection and focussing, which is consistent with the ongoing process of data reduction in qualitative research (Miles and Huberman 1994). I entered emerging codes into my qualitative analysis database and grouped data passages from interviews, documents and field notes, which provided easy access to all quotations and notes on content on a given theme and related themes. Note taking was helpful in documenting relationships between themes and organizing themed content, which helped to structure the write-up (Patton 2002; Creswell 2003).

Inductive coding was also used to identify themes emerging related to substantive issues such as names, facts, places (Patton 2002; Creswell 2003). In this way the coding process was used to fill out the descriptive setting, events and actors. In particular, related dates, events and actions were recorded chronologically and reorganized based on triangulation as additional sources of evidence were analyzed. This approach was helpful in building the case histories presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

The core research questions (Chapter 1) and conceptual framework (Chapter 3) pointed to several potential sources and types of relevant data, which helped to alleviate "data overload" (Miles and Huberman 1994: 56). Collection methods and analysis are further outlined below.

4.2.3.1. Semi-structured Interviews

The main mode of data collection was semi-structured interviews with key informants and other actors. Key informants are both very knowledgeable about the setting and subject of inquiry and are willing to share their insights freely with the researcher (Lindoff and Taylor 2002; Patton 2002; Bernard 2006). According to Bernard (2006), key informants will introduce you to the people and places they think you ought to know about. Following the work of previous qualitative researchers (Lindoff and Taylor 2002; Patton 2002; Bernard 2006) length and variety

of experience and/or employment, social ties, and the convergence of recommendations by other informants was important to identifying key informants.

Six key informants (i.e., NSFC, OMNR, small forest industry, municipal and provincial government, and academia) were gradually identified through the interview process. Key informants were typically political elites (e.g., senior civil servants, local councillors, members of think tanks, business leaders) (Pierce 2008) and were especially helpful in providing further insight at times when the analysis was not 'adding up'. Key informants provided additional information to corroborate my own accounts or explain certain perspectives, which could then be verified through further triangulation with perspectives from other informants. Key informants were also helpful 'gatekeepers' (Creswell 2003) who assisted me with gaining access to the research site by advising who to contact given the nature of my research interests, as well as direct referrals.

Semi-structured interviews are preferred when second interviews are unlikely and the researcher wants to ensure consistency in data collection across interviews (i.e., that certain points are covered and solicited in the same manner) while maintaining flexibility to "follow new leads" during the discussion (Bernard 2006: 212). Standardized open-ended questions were used in a conversational format to encourage a free flow of information between participants and the researcher (Patton 2002; Yin 2003). An evolving set of interview questions (Appendix A) was developed to operationalize a specified version of Gray's (2003) typology (Table 4.1). Probing questions were used to flesh out participants' perspectives (Patton 2002). The UW Office of Research Ethics reviewed the interview protocol and questions and provided clearance (May 2008) for the research prior to conducting field work.

In all instances, potential participants were contacted via telephone, email, or in person and provided with the information letter and verbal consent form (Appendix B). Interviews did not begin until participants had stated they had reviewed the letter, given verbal consent and agreed to be sound recorded. Participants were interviewed in their preferred location. This typically included open door and 'visible' space in band and government offices or meeting rooms, restaurants/coffee shops and industry board rooms, but also indoor and outdoor public spaces such as volunteer fire halls and parks, community resource centres and private residences

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(e.g., kitchen table, front porch). Interviews lasted between 20 minutes to over 3 hours in length, but averaged about 45 minutes. With consent from participants, and where possible, interviews were conducted in-person and were sound recorded to enable transcription and coding. Five interviews were conducted via conference call and sound recorded; in-person discussions took place with three of these participants either before or after the telephone interview. All inputs were kept confidential and non-attributable. Voice recognition computer software was used to make transcribing more efficient (i.e., Dragon Naturally Speaking 10.0).

Based on the nature of the research as a critical study of how the forestry crisis was being framed by actors with uneven influence, and given the array of potential forest stakeholders to be covered, two main purposeful sampling strategies for qualitative inquiry were used (as opposed to random probability sampling) (Miles and Huberman 1994; Patton 2002). 1) *Maximum variation sampling* was used to deliberately document a broad range of diverse views and identify possible common patterns. 2) *Opportunistic sampling* enables the researcher to follow new leads that arise and take advantage of the unexpected. For example, site visits lead to many spontaneous interviews where additional participants were contacted via referrals (i.e., snowball technique) or through cold calls when ongoing reading or informal conversations identified new potential participants. This combination of sampling strategies was intended to support an inductive approach targeting specific and diverse actors, including those with marginalized perspectives who are not likely to be among the 'key', 'primary', or 'active' stakeholders (Grimble and Wellard 1997; Mitchell 2002). A pertinent question to ask key informants was: "whom do you know who sees things differently" (Miles and Huberman 1994: 29).

Seventeen weeks were spent in the Northeast Superior Region across the two field seasons, with brief trips to Sudbury and Thunder Bay for participant observation at conferences. Altogether, 59 people (17 female, 42 male) were interviewed (Table 4.2). Nine participants from the NSFC were interviewed a second time based on the original set of questions to assess any frame shifts as an indication of multi-looped learning. Representatives from a broad range of organizations were interviewed, as illustrated in two different ways in Tables 4.3 and 4.4.

Table 4.2. Interview Participants

	Total Participants	NS Region	NSFC
First Round (June-Sept 2008)	37	26	11
Second Round (May-June 2009)	22	17	5 (+9 follow-up)
Total	59	43	16

Table 4.3. General Breakdown of Interview Participants by Sector

Freq.	Sector
17	Municipal
10	Forest Industry
8	Provincial
7	Federal
5	NGO
4	First Nations
4	Local Enterprise
4	Forest worker

Determining sample size sufficiency "is the terra incognita of qualitative sampling strategy" (Lindolf and Taylor 2002: 129). Given the focus of qualitative research on in-depth coverage of data-rich cases, it is not unusual for qualitative researchers to work with very small samples (i.e., n=1) (Lindolf and Taylor 2002; Patton 2002). Qualitative researchers accept that the ideal number of participants will not be known until a later phase of data collection (Liamputtong 2009). However, Patton (2002) recommends that a *minimum sample* be estimated based on the purpose of the research. Factors to consider include the project scope; the range of stakeholder interests; the complexity of the research problem; the accessibility of potential participants; and, available time and resources of the researcher (Lindolf and Taylor 2002; Patton 2002).

I initially set out to capture as many perspectives as possible within the range of potential participants demarcated by the membership of the NSFC (about 20 board members, resource people and staff from municipal, provincial and federal government, First Nations, forest industry and consultants). Due to the scope of the study and the forestry crisis, I also sought out participants from various forest-related groups within and connected to the Northeast Superior Region (Table 4.4.) that might have a different perspective regarding the forestry crisis and

Table 4.4. Alphabetical Listing of Examples of Participant Position Titles and Organizations

Examples of Titles		Examples of Organizations
Area Forester		Clergue Forest Management Inc.
Business Owner		Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union
Chief		Community Futures Development Corporations
Chief Executive Officer		Domtar Inc.
Chief Forester		Dubreuil Forest Products Ltd.
Chief Program Officer		FedNor
Communications Officer		Labour and Community Adjustment Committees
Consultant		Lakehead University
Coordinator		Laurentian University
Deputy Mayor		Municipality of Wawa
Director of Services		Nature and Outdoor Tourism Ontario
Economic Development Officer		Niska North Inc.
Executive Director		Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation
Forest Technician		Northern Haul Contracting
Forest Worker		Northern Ontario Sustainable Communities Partnership
Forester		Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Forest Service
General Manager		Olav Haavaldsrud Ltd.
Intern		Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
Liaison Officer		Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines
Local Citizens Committee		Ontario Nature
Member		Pukaskwa National Park
Manager		Regional Employment Centre
Mayor		St. Mary's Paper Corp.
Municipal CAO		Tembec
Municipal Treasurer		Township of Chapleau
President		Township of Dubreuilville
Professor		Township of Hornpayne
Program Officer		Township of Manitouwadge
Project Officer		Township of White River
Senior Policy Advisor		
Tourism Operator		
Vice President		

NSFC. As my sample evolved, I purposefully selected additional participants belonging to certain groups that were initially underrepresented (e.g., First Nations, labour). Using both maximum variation and opportunistic sampling strategies, I determined sufficiency based on coverage (fifty-nine interviews conducted with more than 30 organizations representing at least 8 sectors primarily involved with forestry matters in Northern Ontario) and informational redundancy (Patton 2002) or saturation (Liamputtong 2009) (when little or no new data emerged from additional interviews with actors from diverse backgrounds).

While the original intention was to identify participants by stakeholder organization, I elected to be more general in many cases to protect confidentiality due to the small populations

and close working/personal relationships in and between communities, small staff sizes at local organizations, and the sensitive nature of some local issues. Table 4.3 presents a general breakdown of participants by sector while Table 4.4 provides examples of position titles and affiliations *listed alphabetically* to illustrate the range and experience of participants *without linking positions to particular organizations* (i.e., non-corresponding). In addition, selected titles and organizations *have not* been listed to protect confidentiality and these identifiers cannot be matched or counted. For the analysis, Chapter 6 employs the identifiers from Table 4.3 while chapter 7 classifies participants according to those involved in the NSFC (e.g., NSFC 1, NSFC 2, etc.).

4.2.3.2. Document Review

Documents are essential to case study research as they provide stable and unobtrusive sources of evidence that record information about past events and can be used to corroborate evidence from other sources (Patton 2002; Yin 2003). Documents provide additional practical benefits in that they can be reviewed in a time and place convenient to the researcher and enable researchers to obtain statements made by participants that are already in written form (Creswell 2003). Main challenges with document review include finding and gaining access to relevant materials (i.e., documents that include protected information and/or are hard to locate) and document quality (i.e., completeness, accuracy or authenticity) (Creswell 2003).

Document review was a major source of data for my research and mainly involved two activities. I reviewed newspaper and magazine articles to chronicle events and changing perspectives on the forestry crisis from about 2000 to 2009 (Chapter 6). Following the work of Gray (2003), I examined over 200 articles from local papers such as *The Algoma News Review* (Wawa), *The Chapleau Express*, *The Echo* (Manitouwadge) and *The Jackfish Journal* (Hornepayne), regional papers such as *The Sault Star* and *The Timmins Daily Press* and major papers such as *The Toronto Star*. Remarkably, *The Toronto Star* was the only major and southern Ontario newspaper to run an article on challenges in the forestry sector in Northern Ontario during the period 2000-2009. Monthly industry papers focussing on Northern Ontario were also reviewed, such as *The Working Forest* and *Northern Ontario Business*.

Time was allotted during site visits to manually search, review and photocopy articles at town and university libraries and resource centres. In addition, keyword searches (e.g., forestry crisis; crisis; Northeast Superior Forest Community; Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community names) were performed through the University of Waterloo library database Eureka.cc, which provided archival access to key regional and national papers. I designed a media log sheet to systematically track headlines and articles from these sources related to forestry crisis and NSFC (Figure 4.3). Both hard copy and electronic articles were reviewed chronologically, and relevant excerpts were immediately transcribed into the case study database for coding. The same codebook was used to code both interviews and documents.

Figure 4.3. Sample Media Log Sheet

MEDIA LOG SHEET

Date	Headline	Media Source
03/01	Forestry Sector Large Contributor to Northern Economy	Northern Ontario Bus.
12/01	Impact of Ongoing Lumber War Filters to North	Northern Ontario Bus.
03/02	Survival of the Fittest: Northern Mills Invest in Future Liability	Northern Ontario Bus.
07/27/02	World Trade Body Rules in Favour of Canada in Lumber Dispute with U.S.	Timmins Daily Press
07/02	*Lobbying for Support*	Northern Ontario Bus.
11/02	Northern Softwood Lumber Mills Riding Out The Storm	Northern Ontario Bus.
11/06/02	Dubreuil Forest Products Lays Off 20: Soaring Hydro Rates Blamed For Move	Sault Star
15/03/03	150 to be Laid Off in Dubreuilville	Timmins Daily Press
07/03	Triple Blow: Current Market Conditions Creating a "Poisonous" Environment for the Industry	Northern Ontario Bus.
26/05/03	White River Mill Closes for 6 Months	Sault Star
28/05/03	Mill Shutdown 'Devastating' News: White River Told to Prepare for Worst Case Scenario	Sault Star
13/06/03	Dubreuil Forest Products to Lay Off 180: Cutbacks Expected to Continue...	

News media data provide the base for the first part of Chapter 6, namely the event chronology and frame analysis of the unfolding forestry crisis. Reviewing relevant websites, written reports, legal documents (e.g., Robinson-Huron Treaty, SFL agreements), policy and planning documents and maps, administrative documents such as proposals and meeting minutes was also important for developing the case context. In some instances participants directly provided me with relevant reports during interviews that I did not yet know about or could not access (e.g., NSFC Strategic Plan; Superior East Labour Force Study). Data triangulation was important for crosschecking informational accuracy and completeness (Patton 2002).

4.2.3.3. Site Visits and Direct Observation

Direct observation was a third method for data collection employed during site visits. This included passive observation (Patton 2002; Yin 2003) of one Mayor's Group meeting (Dubreuilville, June 2009) and one NSFC meeting (Hornepayne, June 2009). I also visited operational forest company facilities, government and band offices, towns, reserves and local forests to assist my description of the setting and different actors—the physical and human environments (Patton 2002)—presented in Chapters 5 through 7. In addition, I attended two regional conferences on Ontario's tenure system organized by the Northern Ontario Sustainable Communities Partnership (Thunder Bay, March 2009) and the Ontario Professional Foresters Association (Sudbury, April 2009). Both of these conference events provided an opportunity to be a passive observer among two groups (i.e., a grassroots community group and a professional organization) that in general sponsor the local control and conventional industrial forest management discourses examined in the following chapters.

A research journal was used to keep notes from site visits and document the content and context of the above meetings. Research notes were written-up within one week of each event and entered into the case study database. Documented public statements from different actors were occasionally used to supplement the analysis presented in Chapters 6 and 7. Each event also provided opportunities to follow-up with previous interview participants and to identify and confer with future potential participants by simply 'being there'.

Photographs were taken of public spaces to illustrate the case description and support the analysis in order to "convey important case characteristics to outside observers" (Yin 2003: 92). I often revisited photographs and field notes while conducting interview and document analysis to revive my impressions of the context, which helped to me to articulate observations.

4.2.3.4. Mail Survey

A mailed survey was used to gather data on and explore forest stakeholders' perceptions of the Ontario Crown forest tenure system in the Northeast Superior Region to inform NSFC decision making. Email and telephone conversations with NSFC staff contributed to the initial topical focus and survey question development. The survey was intended to identify and describe a

range of 'top of mind' issues and opinions among regional forestry stakeholders as an entry point for further inquiry regarding organizational policies and programs.

Non-probabilistic, purposive sampling methods were used for the survey. When using non-probabilistic sampling methods, Schreuder et al (1999: 289) stress that it is important to "clearly state the assumptions and what the sampled information can and cannot be used for, and draw inferences on that basis." I used non-probabilistic, purposive sampling based on the following rationale:

- the intention to focus on exploring the range of views held by certain people/organizations about a specialized topic in a specific historical, cultural and geographic context, and so findings were not intended to be generalizable (Lindlof and Taylor 2002; Berhard 2006);

- the small scale (i.e., small regional population and number of specialized respondents) and in-depth nature of the research project (Kraus and Allen 1998; Patton 2002; Trochim 2005; Pierce 2008);

- to gather additional information that describes the range of social framings related to the use and control of forests, in order to augment and enrich the dataset for an intensive case study (Bernard 2006);

- the cost, time and physical constraints of conducting a randomized, probabilistic sample (Schreuder et al 1999; Dillman 2009).

The survey sample was purposive (i.e., maximum variation strategy) in that it focussed on reaching all identifiable forest groups within a limited geographical area (i.e., Northeast Superior Region). However, this does not mean that the sample *does not* represent the population—only that it is difficult to verify (Parfitt 2005; Trochim 2005). The main limitation of purposive sampling is that responses from some accessible subgroups might be overweighted (Trochim 2005). While descriptive statistics from the sample are not generalizable to a larger population, they do hold within the given sample and indicate the issues and frequency of responses relative to the particular respondents. A main strength of this sampling method was the generation of a list or range of issues, challenges and opportunities which are instructive as the basis for further inquiry (Berhard 2006). Thus the selected sampling method was suitable given the purpose of the study (Patton 2002).

Core survey questions were developed around broad concerns gleaned from literature on Canadian tenure system reform (e.g., Haley and Nelson 2007; Nelson 2008). These include: where does control over forest resources reside, what (or whose) values are emphasized in forest development, and how are forest-derived benefits distributed? There was intentional overlap between my interview and survey questionnaires (Appendices A and C respectively) on questions pertaining to the control and benefits of public forests. However, survey questions pertaining to perceptions of and preferences for the distribution power and benefits followed a closed-ended (or fixed choice) ranking format (Patton 2002). A closed-ended format for the survey was used to focus respondent's attention on a selected range of key forest stakeholder groups in the region identified through interviews in the first field season. Closed-ended questions also provided 'high-level' and unambiguous data for analysis (Bernard 2006), which was intended to complement the in-depth descriptive data gathered through interviews conducted within the same pool of forest actors.

In addition, the survey included open-ended ranking questions to identify different peoples' perspectives on the challenges and strengths of the current tenure system, their suggestions for other tenure models that could be useful in Ontario, and opportunities to improve tenure arrangements. Open-ended questions were used for these themes because I wanted to explore and "understand the points of view of other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire categories" (Patton 2002: 21). The questionnaire was reviewed by NSFC staff, colleagues, and the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo in order to refine the survey questions and format (Appendix C).

A thorough list of respondents concerned with forestry issues in the Northeast Superior Region (Appendix D) was compiled from available 'sampling frames', which can take on a variety of different forms including mail or published lists of potential participants (Creswell 2003; Pierce 2008; Dillman 2009). Helpful sampling frames included *The Working Forest* and *Northern Business News* business directories which were supplemented with contact information assembled from government, industry and NGO forestry reports, internet searches, and consultation with NSFC staff. Participants were selected based on their experience as part of organizations affected by and/or dealing with the forestry crisis. This included individuals who

had been sensitized to the effects of the crisis through their interaction with the wider community of forest groups involved in forest governance, development and conservation.

With approval from the NSFC and UW Office of Research Ethics, the first round of surveys was distributed by surface mail in early December 2008. NSFC arranged and paid for French translation and mailing. Self-addressed stamped envelopes were included to encourage return. Two rounds of follow-up requests were sent via email in February and again in April 2009. Surveys were also made available at a NSFC public workshop in September 2008. This 'mixed-mode' survey design was used to enhance coverage and response rates, and lower costs associated with repeated surface mail outs (Dillman et al 2009).

A 15 per cent response rate was achieved, based on 28/186 surveys returned. This response rate was satisfactory given the non-probabilistic purposive sampling technique utilized and that mail surveys often achieve 10 per cent to 40 per cent returns (Palys 1997; Parfitt 2005; Trochim 2005). Mail surveys often capture low returns due in part to difficulties with providing detailed written responses, the impersonal nature of mail surveys, peoples' purported lack of interest or knowledge about 'the issues', and problems with survey design (Palys 1997; Parfitt 2005; Trochim 2005; Dillman et al 2009). Other factors contributing to the response rate here included a lack of awareness about the NSFC and about the researcher. Residents in small communities frequently 'wear many hats'; consequently, it is possible that multiple surveys were sent to the same individuals for different roles and/or the same roles in different organizations (e.g., Local Citizen Committees). It is not possible to determine if and how many redundant surveys were sent; however, the latent effect would be a decreased mail out and increased response rate, which would be a positive effect. A limitation of this sampling method is that there was no way to determine the number of responses by organizations/groups relative to those sent.

The combination of closed-ended and open-ended survey questions necessitated two approaches to data analysis. Ordinal survey data were manually entered into a spreadsheet created in Microsoft Excel 2007 to assist with tallies and rankings. I used Excel to generate descriptive statistics and figures pertaining to respondent demographics and ranking questions.

Subsequently, descriptive data gathered through open-ended survey questions were manually entered into QSR NVivo 7.0. I again used an iterative, inductive coding approach to identify themes emerging from the open-ended survey responses (Patton 2002; Creswell 2003). Response coding typically generated between 6 and 13 major themes for open-ended questions. I then assigned rankings using two counting methods for confirmation. The first method counted the total number of times each answer statement was ranked as number 1. The second method determined ranking by counting the total number of times answer statements were listed. Both methods produced similar results, especially with items ranked among top three categories. Exceptions are noted in the discussion of survey findings. Ranked responses from open-ended survey questions were then presented in table form to illustrate my discussion of results.

A draft report was presented to the NSFC for feedback during fall 2009. A copy of the final report (Bullock 2009) was sent to OMNR's Crown tenure system review team in March 2010. Relevant survey findings are included in Chapter 5 to illustrate basic differences in perceptions and preferences emanating from actors in the Northeast Superior Region. This provides a high level entry point for the more detailed frame analysis and event chronology of the forestry crisis in Chapter 6 as well as the analysis of dominant social framings and power relations at work in the formation of the NSFC in Chapter 7. Results are synthesized for discussion to illustrate the conclusions and recommendations in the closing chapter.

4.3. Summary

Adhering to an interpretative and inductive approach to this research, the "case study is both the process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry" (Stake 2003: 136). By interacting with and interpreting a set of events and perspectives about the case, the researcher is also co-constructing the knowledge presented within the case. As outlined above, case study methods enable a deep understanding of a single case by accommodating several data sources incorporated into an evolving database and analysis (Patton 2002; Creswell 2003; Yin 2003). The current study draws on and integrates four sources of evidence (interviews, document review, direct observation and a survey) to achieve data and methodological triangulation, and a well-developed understanding of the case (Miles and Huberman 1994; Patton 2002). A rich

dataset reinforces factual cross checks and provides different insights from different sources about the same research questions (Table 4.5). Data analysis is informed by Gray's (2003) techniques for frame analysis, which provided the platform for both the interview questionnaire and coding set developed for the qualitative data collected. The next chapter introduces the case study region and presents results from the survey on perceptions of the Crown forest tenure system.

Table 4.5. Summary of Data Collection Methods used to address Core Research Questions

Core Research Questions	Interviews	Documents	Direct Observation	Survey
1. How do different actors frame the forestry crisis in the Northeast Superior Region?	X	X	X	X
2. Do actors' frames change/not change overtime? How? Why?	X	X		
3. What forms/sources of power are present and how do they influence, if at all, the construction of shared meaning?	X	X	X	X
4. How does social learning—evidenced by the construction of 'shared meaning' through the development of common frames—influence the way actors approach forest management problems related to policy, planning and practice?	X	X		

CHAPTER 5 – THE CONTROL OF PUBLIC FORESTS IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

5.1. Overview

This chapter presents the case study region and results from the Northeast Superior Region survey on perceptions of the Crown forest tenure system. The first section outlines the provincial significance of Ontario's forest sector, including differences in the distribution of forest resources, employment and community dependence between southern and Northern Ontario. Challenges linked to the recent decline of Ontario's forest sector are then described. A brief historical overview of the main provincial tenure policy and legislative framework for forest resource governance in Ontario follows.

The second section presents key political and economic forces shaping human-forest interactions and patterns of forest and community development in the Northeast Superior Region of Northern Ontario. This region includes the cluster of communities that form the Northeast Superior Forest Community. The biophysical context sets the stage for a description of colonial influences on the form and control of northern communities. A brief history of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal settlements is then provided. Governance arrangements are described to present differences between the conventional roles and levels of involvement among towns, First Nations, provincial and federal agencies, and forest industry actors in service and program delivery and forest management and planning.

The third section briefly examines demographic and economic changes associated with challenges in the forest industry in the Northeast Superior Region. Forest group survey results are presented to highlight perceived strengths and weaknesses of the conventional approach to fibre allocation, perceptions of the distribution of power and forest-derived benefits and regional personal interpretations of sustainable forest management. Taken together, this chapter provides the foundation for subsequent detailed analysis of social framings of the 'forestry crisis' within the Northeast Superior Region and the NSFC.

5.2. Regional Dynamics of Ontario's Forest Resources, Economy and Governance

5.2.1. Provincial Forest Land, Population, and Economy

Ontario's vast forest resources have long been a source of wealth for the Province of Ontario. The provincial forest products sector shipped more than $18 billion in wood products in 2005 (OMNR 2008). However, a downturn in Ontario's forest economy, part of a larger national downturn, continues to challenge communities across the province. Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) (2007) reported that Ontario has lost more forestry jobs than any other region in Canada. In Ontario, between 2003 and 2007 about 8,000 direct jobs were lost through mill closures and temporary layoffs. This downturn impacts Northern Ontario disproportionately, as does the resulting conflict surrounding forest policy and planning. Impacts of the forestry crisis must be considered with regard to the uneven geographical distribution of Ontario's forests and population, as well as the locus of forest governance control.

Southern Ontario (shaded areas south of the Forest Management Planning Area in Figure 5.1.) is more densely populated and urbanized than the north—93 per cent (about 11 million) of the provincial population lives in the southern area that represents less than 8 per cent of the province (about 86,000 km^2). There is also a high degree of private land ownership, about 87 per cent (OFA 2009), and 20 per cent of the southern land base is farmland (OMAFRA 2009). Close to large markets in the USA, southern Ontario's economy is heavily industrialized.

In contrast, Northern Ontario contains the majority of Ontario's commercially productive forest lands, referred to as the Forest Management Planning Area (OMNR 2008) (Figure 5.1). The provincial north (about 989 000 km^2) is 95 per cent public Crown land and 66 per cent forested. Northern Ontario's boreal forest accounts for 76 per cent of provincial forest land and is the backbone of the forest industry (Province of Ontario 2008). The region is home to 16 of the province's 33 pulp and paper mills. Ontario's 25 largest sawmills produce 80 per cent of the province's lumber; 22 of these are in Northern Ontario.

About one-third of northern communities are forest industry dependent (Province of Ontario 2008). Although 800,000 people live in Northern Ontario—just 7 per cent of the total provincial population—26,000 northerners were directly employed in Ontario's forest products

industry in 2005 (Robinson 2007). This represents 31 per cent of provincial forest workers.

Employment in this sector has continually dwindled due to the downturn in the forest economy.

In Northern Ontario, about 2,200 direct jobs in forestry were lost between 2003 and 2005

(Minister's Council of Forest Sector Competitiveness 2005), while others suggest this number of

lost jobs increased to 9,000 by fall 2007, representing a loss of $869 million to the northern

economy (NDP 2007). Northern forest resources and industries are important to Ontario's forest

sector. In additional, their vital contribution to the northern economy and communities must not

be overlooked.

Figure 5.1. Ontario's Forest Management Planning Area

(OMNR 2006)

5.2.2. Evolution in Forest Governance in Ontario

The majority of commercially productive forests are located in Northern Ontario where there is a

high degree of community dependence on resources. However, forests have long been controlled

by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) and the commercial forest industry

through the Forest Licensing System (or "tenure system") (OMNR 2008). The current system is

rooted in colonial ideology of the mid-1800s, when Ontario's foundational policies and

legislation (i.e., *Crown Timber Act* of 1850) were designed to: 1) retain Crown ownership and

control of forest lands and resources, 2) promote industrial extraction and sale of timber from public lands, and 3) create provincial revenues from Crown timber sales (Drushka 2003; Nelles 2005). In addition to creating a longstanding provincial government dependence on Crown timber revenues, "these policies formed the basis of a unique Canadian partnership between timber-based forest industries and colonial (later provincial) governments that controlled the majority of the forest land" (Drushka 2003: 30).

Under this early system, harvesting fees were paid when timber was sold rather than when the rights were conferred to industry. This approach helped to mobilize limited capital during a time of colonial development, promote land clearance for settlement and agriculture, and at the same time generate revenues for government to spend on "measures popular with the electorate" (Drushka 2003: 30) (presumably in the more settled provincial south). Ontario's forest policies have since been developed through ongoing collaboration with large-scale pulp and paper and forest products companies, resulting in regulatory capture and a closed policy network (Hessing et al 2005; Nelles 2005; Robinson 2007). A provincial focus on industrial forestry and commodity exports has since limited the flow of fibre to secondary manufacturing, constraining development within Northern Ontario, the Province's principal forest territory.

The *Crown Forest Sustainability Act (1994)* and *Environmental Assessment (EA) Act (1994)* provide the current legislative framework for forest management in Ontario. Both were partly the result of high profile public protests over logging in Temagami, Ontario during the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the ensuing *Class Environmental Assessment* of timber management that involved over 4 years of public hearings (Lawson et al 2001; May 2005; OMNR 2008). Under the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act,* Sustainable Forest Licences (SFLs) held mainly by industry grant long-term (20 year) harvesting rights to licensees for all species of trees in a given Management Unit. These licences have requirements for renewal and maintenance. Forest Resource Licences are also granted for up to 5 years for activities such as salvage and non-commercial uses such as firewood. These are generally smaller in scale and can overlap with other licenses as they outline specific species, volumes and stands to be harvested. The *EA Act* is meant to improve management practices through conditions for increased reporting on wildlife, specific opportunities for Aboriginal people in local planning, and increased public involvement

in decision making through the creation of Local Citizen Advisory Committees. Such measures were introduced to redress perceived inadequacies pertaining to ecological and social concerns created by conventional policies. However, the conventional model of industrial forestry and tenure prevails in Northern Ontario.

A growing awareness among governments, communities, industry, and academics (Haley and Nelson 2007; Robinson 2007; Rosehart 2008) is that the conventional tenure system has constrained diversification and innovation by limiting access to fibre for new entrants such as local enterprise, First Nations and communities, and has hampered the development of non-conventional forest products and uses (e.g., bioenergy; medicinals; forest foods). Dating back to the 1940s post-WWII era, Ontario's current tenure policies are based on the notion of sustained yield harvesting, intended to ensure steady fibre flows to designated processors through the liquidation of timber (Lawson et al 2001; Haley and Nelson 2007). Consequently, these policies emphasize timber harvesting rights (deemphasizing non-timber products) and long-term security for large investors through leases that are renewed every five years. Furthermore, 80 per cent of annual fibre allocations are associated with large-scale processing facilities that by design require minimum fibre volumes to be economically viable, and 100 per cent of the annual cut is designated to come from specific forest areas (Haley and Nelson 2007). In this rigid institutional and operational setting, it is difficult to adjust policies, reconfigure mill operations, and redirect fibre flows without invariably impacting specific mills, towns, and forests.

A perceived need among civic-private-public actors to reform the institutions for forest governance and decision making is at the centre of a complex and contentious decade-long debate on how best to stimulate Ontario's failing forest sector and communities. The increasingly shaky state of the forest industry and severity of the problems to be faced by the province (since about 2001) has given a louder voice to groups that have been historically less visible. Emboldened municipal leaders, First Nations and non-government organizations (both external environmental and internal community groups), among others, are lobbying senior governments and industry with their desires and ideas for change. Over the last decade, several regional-scale grassroots action groups have also emerged across the provincial north [e.g.,

Saving the Region of Ontario North Group (STRONG); Northern Ontario Sustainable Communities Partnership (NOSCP), see Chapter 6].

The next section presents the regional context from which another informal group of actors emerged to form the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation, as a response to economic and social challenges shared by a group of forest communities northeast of Lake Superior in Northern Ontario (Figure 5.2). Results of the key informant survey are presented to provide a 'high-level' analysis of perceptions of and attitudes about the existing Crown forest tenure system, sustainable forest management and the distribution of power and forest-derived benefits found in the Northeast Superior Region. These general perceptions are discussed here as an entry point for a more nuanced analysis of social framings presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

5.3. Hinterland Geographies of Lake Superior's North Shore

5.3.1. Biophysical Setting

The Northeast Superior Region is located adjacent to the north eastern shore of Lake Superior in Northern Ontario. This roughly 60,000 km^2 vernacular region straddles the transition between the Eastern Great Lakes-St Lawrence Forest and the northern boreal forest region (Albert et al. 2006). Boreal softwoods (black and white spruce, jack pine, larch) and shade intolerant hardwoods (trembling aspen, white birch, balsam poplar) are common species to the northwest where disturbances from fire, wind, and pest outbreaks play an important role in the natural regeneration of new forests (OMNR 2009). The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence forest to the southeast is considered a transition zone between the Carolinian deciduous forest of eastern North America and the predominately coniferous boreal forests to the north. As such, it contains some boreal tree species but is characterised by a greater variety of deciduous broad-leaf species, typically yellow birch, sugar and red maple, basswood, and red oak interspersed with coniferous eastern white pine, red pine, eastern hemlock and white cedar.

The transition from Great Lakes-St. Lawrence to boreal forest conforms with the 5°C mean annual isotherm east of Lake Superior and the 4°C mean annual isotherm to the west (Thompson 2000: 32). Regional annual precipitation in the Northeast Superior Region ranges

from 90 to 100 cm/year along the northeast shore of Lake Superior (among the highest in the province), to between 70-90 cm/year further inland. The more northern boreal forest ecosystem is generally less productive and species diverse due to longer, colder winters.

The retreat of the Laurentian Ice Sheet from this area (between about 10.6 and 9.0 thousand years before present) exposed the scoured and fractured granite bedrock, leaving shallow surface deposits of till, thin soils, and myriad lakes and wetlands (Armson 2001; Warkentin 2001). The Northeast Superior Region also crosses a major continental drainage divide, 'the height of land' that separates the northward draining Hudson Bay/James Bay Basin (Arctic) and the Lake Superior-Lake Huron Basin (Atlantic) to the south. Along the precipitous northeastern shoreline of Lake Superior, the Algoma Plateau decreases in elevation from over 600 to 250 metres above sea level in the north (Warkentin 2001).

5.3.2. Colonial and Company Influences: Treaties, Settlements and Development

The Northeast Superior Region offers scenes, history, and a natural resource base that Canadian geographers suggest have been important to shaping a national consciousness (Wallace 1987; Bone 1992; Warkentin 2001). This scenic yet often severe landscape has been celebrated in paintings by Canada's famous Group of Seven painters. Ongoing characterisations, whether by artists or the provincial government, have portrayed the provincial north as a rich Crown resource storehouse largely devoid of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people (Lawson et al 2001; Ballamingie 2009). Geographers have shown how north Superior maps have historically been used to convey romantic and inconsistent notions of the region that focus on specific external interests (e.g., 'playground' for American and Canadian outdoorsmen who will meet welcoming Indian chiefs and giant game fish) with negative social implications (Young and Wilson 2010). However, forming and linking isolated settlements throughout the heart of Northern Ontario has been important to provincial and national development. The processes and outcomes of colonial expansion and later resource development have likewise influenced community form and culture in Northeast Superior Region, for better or worse.

The region includes several affiliated forest-dependent communities, including: Chapleau, Dubreuilville, Hornepayne, Manitouwadge, Wawa, and White River and the

Brunswick House, Chapleau Cree, Chapleau Ojibwe[4], Hornepayne, Michipicoten, Missanabie
Cree, Pic Mobert and Pic River First Nations communities (Figure 5.2). Located between
47.8°N and 49.2°N latitude and 83.4°W and 85.8°W longitude, this is a relatively isolated and
thinly populated region on the peripheries of the larger regional centres of Sault Ste. Marie (300
km southeast) and Thunder Bay (300 km west). As such the Northeast Superior Region
represents a distinct geographical, social, economic space between major urban and service
centres where resource sector employment, small town living, wilderness recreation and the
TransCanada Highway and national railroads are prominent.

Figure 5.2. Northeast Superior Region, Northern Ontario, Canada
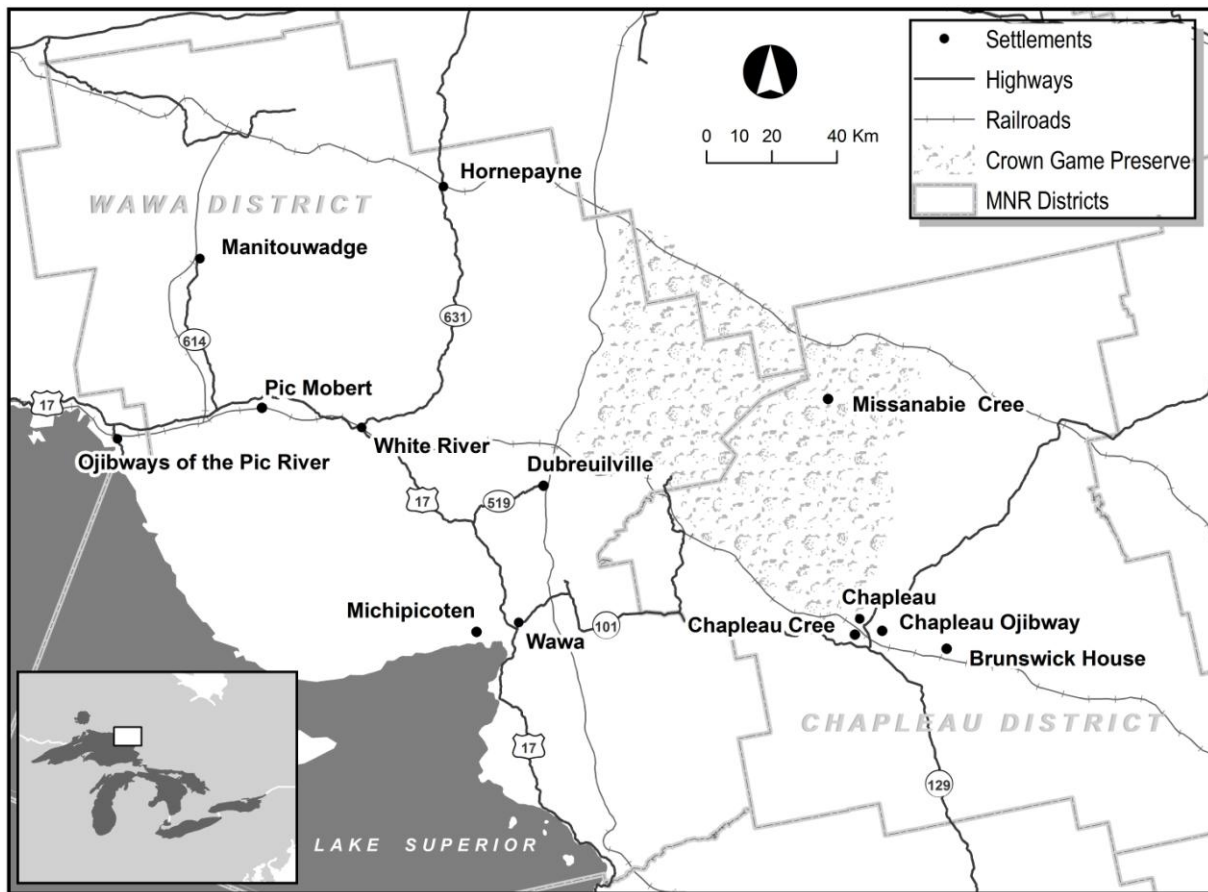
(Source data: DMTI 2009 and OMNR 2009)

[4] Ojibwe, Ojibway and Ojibwa are used interchangeably; thus I have adopted the spellings used by each First Nation.

Positioned on the boundary between Northwestern and Northeastern Ontario, the Northeast Superior Region lies at the centre of a hinterland that has been referred to as politically unfocussed (Wallace 1987: 447) and that lacks functional integration (Warkentin 2001). These characterisations have much to do with observations that settlement and transportation patterns as well as government and corporate decision making, migration, communication and resource flows were designed to serve 'outside' interests, rather than those concerned with forming an internally cohesive and functional provincial north. Historically, external private and senior government interests have prevailed.

The early discovery of minerals along the northern shores of Lakes Huron and Superior during the 1840s prompted the Province of Canada to pursue treaty negotiations with the resident Aboriginal peoples in order to 'open' the region's natural resources to exploration and development (Surtees 1986; INAC 2008). Under the Robinson Treaties of 1850, certain groups of Ojibwa exchanged "...forever, all their right, title, and interest in the whole territory" between the lake shores and the "height of land" (i.e., Hudson Bay-Great Lakes divide) in exchange for payment, the creation of reserves, and the right to continue to hunt and fish in the manner to which they were accustomed (except on private property) (INAC 2008).

By 1905-1906, the federal government was motivated by Cree and Ojibwa petitions to negotiate terms for Treaty 9 (or the James Bay Treaty) due to ongoing pressures from non-Aboriginal settlement, resource development (mining, forestry and later energy) and the building of the railroads throughout First Nations' traditional territory (INAC 2008). However, for various reasons (e.g., poor timing of treaty negotiators, disease outbreak), many distinct groups of First Nation and Métis people did not sign the treaties of 1850 and 1905-06, leading to several outstanding land claims (Surtees 1986). These treaties marginalized the Aboriginal population and at the same time extended the geographic and resource base for what would become the Province of Ontario. Such arrangements formalized linkages to a centrally controlled heartland government and urban centres. Discussed below, two forms of socio-economic control soon emerged to shape human-forest relations, work and settlement in Northern Ontario—Indian reserves and company towns.

5.3.2.1. Indian Reserves

The establishment of reserves and forced settlement of previously nomadic Cree and Ojibwa hunters was extremely damaging to First Nations people and culture. Several First Nations in the Northeast Superior Region have endured ongoing resettlement, poor housing conditions and services, exclusion from resource benefits, little compensation, ongoing land claims negotiations and an overall disrespect for First Nations' rights and way of life[5]. For example, not all First Nations in the Northeast Superior Region received their initial land entitlements relative to the terms of the Robinson-Huron Treaties and Treaty 9. Chapleau Ojibway, Pic River Ojibway, and Missanabie Cree never signed treaties and waited several decades for a community land base. Missanabie Cree are still in negotiations with the provincial and federal government for 24 km^2 of Crown land (OMNR 2002; OMAA 2009).

Conversely, the federal government *did* establish an 80 ha reserve for the Michipicoten First Nation in 1885. However, the reserve was not recognized by the provincial government and was subsequently sold to land speculators during the Wawa gold rush in 1900 (Michipicoten First Nation 2010). Further, despite local and OMNR recognition for their historic presence and involvement in community and commerce (Douglas 1995; OMNR 2002), Hornepayne First Nation is not recognized by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). The First Nation does not have reserve land and remains loosely organized.

Some First Nations which received land were subsequently forced to move several times. This was due to ongoing government land sales, poor land and health conditions, and physical distance from modern service and employment centres. For example, in 1925 the Province formed the 700,000 ha Chapleau Crown Game Preserve, which surrounded the existing 7000 ha Brunswick House First Nation reserve (Brunswick House First Nation 2010). The First Nation was landless until the federal government purchased provincial land for a new reserve in 1947. In 1973, Brunswick House First Nation traded 260 ha of their existing reserve to again move to a new site closer to Chapleau. Officially closed to hunting and trapping, the Game Preserve

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[5] Others (e.g., Dickason 2002) have examined the wider socio-economic context and effects of the government's policy of assimilation. My focus is on the implications of this policy for current forest governance arrangements in Ontario.

remains a source of conflict because traditional First Nations occupants and the Provincial representatives hold different views about First Nations' right to hunt and trap in the Preserve. In contrast, large-scale industrial logging has long occurred in what is supposed to be a wildlife sanctuary.

Michipicoten First Nation also made several moves due to ongoing servicing problems with 'new' settlements. For example, there were environmental problems at their penultimate site, which was built by resource company interests in 1955. This site was condemned in 1971 by the Algoma Health Unit as "unfit for human habitation" due to serious problems with very poor drainage and sanitation (Michipicoten First Nation 2010). In another example, the Town of Chapleau constructed the town sewage reservoir within 300 metres of the original Chapleau Cree reserve. This long discouraged band member settlement until the new Fox Lake reserve was established in 1989 through negotiations with the federal and provincial governments (Wakenagun Community Futures Development Corporation 2010).

Ongoing unstable and unhealthy conditions have scattered band members and constrained First Nations community development and culture. With respect to forests, First Nations control over forest management remains limited to reserve lands (Rainforest Alliance 2006: 16):

> Historically, the Province of Ontario has interpreted Treaties as providing the continual right to fish, hunt and trap with no notion that treaties provide for co-management or for sharing of natural resources. In general, First Nations do not share this narrow view of treaty rights and the governments and First Nations agree forest management could impact these rights.

Alienation from traditional hunting and fishing areas, the intentional exclusion from decision making over and benefits from timber, mineral and hydro development (Kuhlberg 2003), as well as limited local employment and services, have disempowered many First Nations. The practical limitations for First Nations forestry enterprise and decisions-making are elaborated below. As one example, as of 2006 only one First Nation—Pic River Ojibway—had a fibre commitment on an SFL (Black River) in the vicinity of the Northeast Superior Region (Table 5.2). In Chapters 6 and 7, First Nations participants describe challenges to their participation and lack of benefit from forest management planning and operations on their traditional territories.

5.3.2.2. Company Towns

The towns of the Northeast Superior Region have been shaped by the unique planning history and community culture associated with single-enterprise company towns and provincial government authority. Provincial and federal support for resource exploration and exploitation encouraged private investment in Northern Ontario and gave rise to the 'company town'. In an effort to attract (and retain) individuals and families to isolated places, all housing, service, and recreation needs were provided by one major employer (Goltz 1992). Numerous company towns were established across Northern Ontario during the late 1800s and first half of the 1900s and perpetuated features associated with "a 'colonial-frontier setting', including resource dependency, environmental pollution, external control and an uncertain future, a low quality of life and a corporate paternalism" (Saarinen 1992: 165). Saarinen's depiction refers to the significant role of 'the company' as provider and administrator of day-to-day economic and social life. Similarly, Reed (1990) described the prominent position of OMNR in northern resource towns given its visible daily presence and its role in controlling citizen-forest interactions, whether for recreation or industry, through the regulation of wilderness road access, hunting and fishing, and forest and water resource use.

Most Northeast Superior towns emerged from former trading posts and work camps populated by European newcomers pursuing opportunities in trade with the Aboriginal inhabitants, resource extraction, and transportation. For example, both Wawa and Chapleau have historic roots in the early fur trade (1700s), and later emerged as larger centres based on forestry, mining and the railroad. The current site of Chapleau was established when the Canadian Pacific Railroad was extended in 1885. The discovery of gold during the mid-1890s and later iron ore brought additional people and industry (i.e., Algoma Steel) to Wawa.

The other four Northeast Superior towns were specifically established as permanent settlements to service major industries located in the area. White River (1884) and Hornepayne (1918) were railroad towns, functioning as important service and overnight centres for transcontinental passenger and freight trains travelling through the heart of Northern Ontario between Toronto/Montreal and Winnipeg (Douglas 1995; Township of White River 2010). Manitouwadge was established in 1954 by Noranda Inc. as a mining town to support the Geco

Copper Mine (Warkentin 2001). Dubreuilville (1961)—a forest company town in the truest sense—was formed when Dubreuil Brothers Ltd. relocated their French Canadian family sawmilling operations, village, and 200 people (Magpie circa. 1954) to the current town site (Town of Dubreuilville 2009).

5.3.2.3 Governance Structures and Processes

Wallace (1987: 443) points out that the Shield hinterland in general "lacks the institutional structures through which its inhabitants' common regional interests can be focussed and pursued". Rather than dismissing the presence and importance of a shared 'northern culture', Wallace's observation refers to hinterland traits such as physical distance between centres and vital heartland linkages that presumably override regionalism and the development of internal linkages. These challenges are apparent in the Northeast Superior Region where a small population is geographically dispersed among several small settlements surrounded by vast areas of Crown land. Important ties to industry and senior government are also readily apparent. For example, the region's major resource companies are directed by head offices located in larger regional centres (e.g., Thunder Bay, Toronto) or other provinces and countries.

There is a prominent senior government presence linked to northern resources, services and economic development. The Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, and Forestry[6], and FedNor typically act as government overseers and funding partners for northern service and infrastructure projects, socio-economic services and local planning, and resource planning and management—all central to northern development. For the purpose of provincial service delivery, towns and First Nations in the Northeast Superior Region fall within the districts of Algoma, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. However, districts themselves are not incorporated and so do not have the same level of administration (and therefore regional representation and decision making influence) as counties and regional municipalities in Southern Ontario.

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[6] As discussed further in the Chapter 6, the economic component of forestry was moved out of the OMNR into MNDM(F) in June 2009.

In much of Northern Ontario, regional and even municipal planning, as well as resource planning and management, have been top-down and focussed on physical rather than social and economic development (Anthony Usher Planning Consultant and OMNR 1994). In this situation the interests of provincial ministries, resource producers and consumers have prevailed "while local community interests have taken a back seat" (Anthony Usher Planning Consultant and OMNR 1994: 7). While factors such as low or dispersed population and small tax base challenge the development of local environmental resource decision making institutions in Northern Ontario (Bullock and Watelet 2006), advocates for northern development suggest that this is because local capacity *has not* been developed, disputing that it *cannot* be developed.

The reeves and mayors of many small towns typically work on a part-time basis to fulfill local administration and leadership duties. To present a unified voice and advance their mutual interests, municipalities in the Northeast Superior Region (and across the provincial north) belong to one of two municipal associations representing the districts of Northern Ontario [i.e., Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) or Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FENOM)].

Table 5.1. First Nations Governance Structures in Ontario

First Nation Band	Tribal Council	Tribal Organization
Chapleau Cree Missanabe Cree	Mushkegowuk	Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN)
Hornepayne[7]	Matawa	
Brunswick House Chapleau Ojibway	Wabun	
Pic Mobert First Nation	Nokiiwin	Anishinabek Nation [Union of Ontario Indians (UOI)]
Michipicoten First Nation Ojibways of Pic River	Unaffiliatated	

(source data from: NAN 2009; UOI 2009)

Each First Nation elects a Chief and Council to manage band affairs. First Nations within the NSFC can also be part of larger regional tribal councils that typically include 6-8 different bands and tribal organizations that represent provincial level administrative units (Table 5.1).

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[7] There were conflicting listings for tribal council membership across Canadian federal and First Nations websites. For example, while the Hornepayne First Nation is listed as a member of the Matawa Tribal Council by both NAN and Chiefs of Ontario, neither the Matawa Tribal Council nor INAC make this link.

These organizations offer various socio-economic services and programs, act as forums, and as policy advocates on issues of importance to First Nations (NAN 2009; UOI 2009).

With respect to forestry matters, Sustainable Forest Licence holders presently have the primary role and responsibility for forest management and planning. In addition to logging and silviculture, SFL holders are responsible for the preparation and implementation of Forest Management Plans (FMP), gathering information on licensed plan areas, conducting operations in accordance with approved plans, and monitoring and reporting on compliance (Clergue Forest Management Inc. 2005; Domtar Inc. 2008). The OMNR in turn is responsible for reviewing and approving plans, auditing reports to ensure that operations comply with approved plans, and communications with First Nations.

While the Northeast Superior Region does not have formal administrative boundaries, the previously identified towns and First Nations are distributed among nine Forest Management Units (FMUs), which are administered by several local and regional corporate and provincial government offices (Table 5.2). The FMUs are the Algoma Forest; Big Pic Forest; Black River Forest; J.E. Martel Forest; Nagagami Forest; Magpie Forest; Pic River Ojibway Forest; Pineland Forest; and White River Forest. These licences are overseen by district level OMNR offices (e.g., Chapleau, Wawa, Sault Ste. Marie) as part of OMNR's Northeast (head office in Timmins) and Northwest Regions (head office in Thunder Bay).

Licensing arrangements involve several major forest companies whose interconnected business dealings variously affect towns throughout the region. In addition to the SFL holder, licenses typically specify one or more companies that have been guaranteed a certain amount/species of wood by the Minister ('ministerial fibre commitments') (Table 5.2). This has created a complex network of fibre flows among different companies, forests and towns—the logic of which is often challenged on economic, social and ecological grounds. What happens in one forest, town or forestry operation can therefore have an immediate ripple effect in the area through non-delivery of wood, the loss of employment, or allocations becoming available. Under this arrangement, forest companies and the provincial government influence forest access, use and the distribution of benefits through management planning processes, regulation as well as core employment in the region.

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Table 5.2. Sustainable Forest Licenses in the Northeast Superior Region

SFL Area and Current Licence Version	Main License Holder and/or Company(ies)	MNR District	Other commitments on the forest as per MNR's current licence version
Algoma Forest/ 05-May-06	Clergue Forest Mgt. Ltd. (S.S. Marie) includes: Boniferro Mill Works (S.S. Marie); Columbia Forest Products-Levesque Division (Hearst); Domtar (Espanola); Midway Lumber Mills (Thessalon); St. Mary's Paper (S.S.Marie); Weyerhaeuser (Wawa)	S.S. Marie & Wawa Districts, Northeast Region	St. Mary's Paper (S.S. Marie); Weyerhaeuser (Limer); Midway Lumber Mills Ltd. (Thessalon); Levesque Plywood Limited (Hearst)
Nagagami Forest 05-May-06	Nagagami Forest Mgt. Ltd. (Hornepayne) includes: Olav Haavaldsrud Timber Company Ltd. (Hornepayne); Columbia Forest Products (Hearst); Longlac Wood Industries Inc. (Longlac)	Wawa District, Northeast Region	Levesque Plywood Ltd. (Hearst); Longlac Wood Industries Inc. (Longlac); Weyerhaeuser (Limer); Olav Haavaldsrud Timber Company Ltd. (Hornepayne)
White River Forest	Domtar (White River)	Wawa District, NE	Levesque Plywood Ltd. (Hearst); Weyerhaeuser (Limer)
Magpie Forest 12-July-06	Dubreuil Forest Products Limited (Buchanan Group) (Dubreuilville)	Wawa District, Northeast Region	Kimberly-Clark Forest Products Inc. (Terrace Bay); Columbia Forest Products-Levesque Plywood Ltd. (Hearst)
Pic River Ojibway Forest 05-May-06	Great West Timber Ltd. (Buchanan Group) (Thunder Bay)	Wawa District, Northeast Region	Buchanan Northern Hardwoods Inc. (Thunder Bay); Kimberly-Clark Inc. (Terrace Bay); Levesque Plywood Ltd. (Hearst)
Big Pic Forest 05-May-06	Marathon Pulp Inc. (Marathon)	Nipigon District, Northwest Region	Kimberly-Clark Forest Products Inc. (Terrace Bay); Longlac Wood Industries Inc. (Longlac); Grant Forest Products Inc. (Englehart)
Black River Forest 31-Mar-06	Great West Timber Ltd. (Buchanan Group) (Thunder Bay)	Wawa District, Northeast Region	Kimberly-Clark Forest Products Inc. (Terrace Bay); Dubreuil Forest Products Limited (Dubreuilville); Pic Heron Indian Band (Heron Bay); Levesque Plywood Ltd. (Hearst)
J.E. Martel Forest 05-May-06	J.E. Martel and Sons Ltd (Chapleau) (now Tembec Inc.)	Chapleau & Wawa Districts, Northeast Region	Levesque Plywood Limited's Hearst; Grant Forest Products Inc. (Timmins); Weyerhaeuser (Limer); Pineal Lake Lumber Company Limited (Pineal Lake); Norbord Industries Inc. (Cochrane)
Pineland Forest 12-July-06	Pineland Timber Company (Domtar) (Timmins)	Chapleau & Timmins Districts, Northeast Region	Norbord Industries Inc. (Cochrane); Grant Forest Products Inc. (Timmins); Pineal Lake Lumber Company Limited (Pineal Lake)

(source data: OMNR 2009)

The strong relationship of community/regional and natural resource development and planning seems to warrant an increased decision making role for northern communities. Since

the mid-1990s, Local Citizens Committees (LCCs) have played a consultative role with the forest industry and the province in the development of area Forest Management Plans (Robson and Kant 2009). LCCs typically include groups with non-consumptive and/or non-commercial rights of access to public forests (berry pickers, naturalists, recreationalists), groups with additional rights to resource taking (hunters, sport fishers, hunting guides, lodge operators, trappers and independent logging contractors), groups with Aboriginal Treaty rights (First Nations, Métis), and those with long-term timber harvesting rights and management responsibilities (forest products companies) (Smith 1996; Robson and Kant 2009). However, these local committees do not hold formal authority over decisions affecting the allocation, access and use of public forest resources located nearby. The strong association between regional forest employment and population trends also makes a case for structural change to provide local and regional stability.

5.3.2.4. Recent Changes in Northeast Superior Population and Employment

Northeast Superior towns are home to about 9506 and 1175 non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people, respectively (Statistics Canada 2008) (Table 5.3). However, the Aboriginal population rises to 2340 when local First Nations reserves are included (Table 5.4). Table 5.3. presents Statistics Canada community profile data for towns and reserves in the Northeast Superior Region and does not include off-reserve Aboriginal individuals as these persons may live outside of the region. Still, about 20 per cent of the 11 856 residents are Aboriginal (i.e., North American Indian and Métis).

Forest dependence is illustrated by recent population decreases associated with several recent mill closures (Tables 5.3 and 5.5). Between 2001 and 2006, the region's total population declined by 16.4 per cent, compared to a provincial increase of 6.6 per cent (Statistics Canada 2008). As a subset of the total population, municipal Aboriginal populations in Northeast Superior Region experienced large shifts, both up and down, during the same period. Notably, the Aboriginal population of Dubreuilville dropped by more than 60 per cent, while the Aboriginal population of White River apparently grew by over 75 per cent. This enormous increase in White River could correspond to the large number of band members (66) who moved away from the Pic Mobert Reserve as well as declines in nearby Hornepayne, Wawa, and

Dubreuilville during this same period, although this is speculation. Overall, municipal Aboriginal populations are decreasing (-17.5% from 2001-2006) in keeping with the broader trend of population decrease in the Northeast Superior Region.

Table 5.3. Total and Aboriginal Population Decrease within Northeast Superior Towns, 2001-2006

Town	Total[8] Pop. 2001	Total Pop.[8] 2006	% Pop. Decrease, 2001-06	Aboriginal[9] Pop. 2001	Aboriginal[9] Pop. 2006	% Pop. Decrease, 2001-06
Chapleau	2,832	2,354	-16.9	315	250	-20.6
Dubreuilville	967	773	-20.1	155	60	-61.3
Hornepayne	1,362	1,209	-11.2	215	140	-34.9
Manitouwadge	2,949	2,300	-22.0	115	130	+13.0
Wawa	3,668	3,204	-12.6	445	275	-38.2
White River	993	841	-15.3	180	320	+77.8
Total	12771	10681	-16.4	1425	1175	-17.5

(Source data: Statistics Canada 2008)

Table 5.4. First Nations Population, Various Years.

First Nation	Date	Reserve Pop.	Off-Reserve Pop	Total
Brunswick House First Nation	2009	175	473	653
Chapleau Ojibway	2009	32	8	40
Ojibway of the Pic River	2009	496	411	987
Pic Mobert	2009	325	503	829
Michipicoten	2009	54	717	771
Chapleau Cree First Nation	2007	83	287	370[a]
Missanabie Cree	2004	-	-	348[b]
Hornepayne	2002	-	-	125[c]
Total		1165	2399	4123

(Source data: OMNR 2002[c]; Dubreuil Forest Products Ltd. 2003[b] Statistics Canada 2008; Town of Chapleau 2010 [a])

More than 900 jobs were eliminated in the NSFC region with the closure of Domtar Forest Products in White River, Weyerhaeuser Oriented Strand Board (OSB) in Wawa, and Dubreuil Forest Products in Dubreuilville in late 2007 and early 2008 (AWIC 2008) (Table 5.5). These simultaneous closures have had an added impact in that these facilities were all located approximately 100 kilometres from one another, where local people, families and economies are closely intertwined. Numerous forest-dependent small businesses and 'jobbers' have been affected, for example, tree planters, truck drivers, loggers, heavy equipment operators, roadside

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[8] Includes both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal residents, but not Aboriginals on-reserve.
[9] "Included in the Aboriginal identity population are those persons who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, that is, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit, and/or those who reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian, as defined by the *Indian Act* of Canada, and/or those who reported they were members of an Indian band or First Nation" (Statistics Canada, Community Profiles 2006).

mechanics and other support services. At least two First Nations owned companies were also affected. Pic River Development Corporation had a logging contract with Weyerhaeuser to supply poplar to Wawa's OSB plant and had an allocation of 76 000 m^3 from Domtar, which would have been affected by these closures (OMNR 2002). Michipicoten First Nation also owns a forestry company that supplies mills in the region (Rainforest Alliance 2006). The high level of interdependence among neighbouring forest-reliant communities has become apparent as local actors work to understand and deal with rapid change.

Table 5.5. Recent Major Forestry and Mining Closures Affecting NSFC Communities

Town	Company/facility	Closure Date	# Jobs lost
Chapleau	Domtar Forest Products	Spring 2005	67
Dubreuilville	Dubreuil Forest Products	Winter 2008	329
Hornepayne	Olav Haavaldsrud	July 2006 to Spring 2008, temporary lay-offs (fire)	125
Manitouwadge	Newmont Canada Ltd.	Summer 2006	245
Wawa	Weyerhaeuser OSB	Fall 2007	163
White River	Domtar Forest Products	Fall 2007	229

(Source data: AWIC 2008; NSFC 2008)

The above communities have been grappling with mill closures and job loss, population decline due to the mass outmigration of skilled labour and youth, falling real estate values and foreclosures, declining municipal tax bases, and service loss. This series of changes is typical of the 'downward spiral' usually experienced by extractive resource-dependent towns associated with the loss of a primary industry (Beattie et al. 1981; Decter et al. 1989). However, given the number of communities affected and the extent of the decline, this combination of economic, demographic, policy and ecological challenges is seen as part of the ongoing 'forestry crisis' in Northern Ontario.

Survey results reflect varying levels of satisfaction with forest governance and the tenure system in its current state. These ranged from strategic insights where minor improvements to the existing system *could be* made, to strong normative calls for major overhauls that *should be* undertaken. Results are presented here to help establish different views surrounding the emerging debate on how best to address the ongoing forestry crisis. This sets the stage for Chapter 6 which presents qualitative results of the frame analysis of newspaper articles, reports

and personal interviews between 2000 and 2009, which details how conventional and emerging local control advocates constructed the 'forestry crisis' as an unfolding experience. Evolving problem, solution and identity frames and power relations are further analyzed to enrich and ground the survey data presented here.

5.4. Survey Results: Perceptions of the Crown Forest Tenure System, Northeast Superior Region

5.4.1. Respondent Demographics

As discussed in Chapter 4, a mailed survey was conducted with the NSFC to assess stakeholder perceptions of the Crown tenure system in order to provide baseline information for agency decision makers. Most survey respondents self-identified as being from municipal, provincial and federal government as well as industry (Table 5.6). Industry respondents were from large (2) and small firms (1). Overall, respondents were older and had many years of experience in their positions and in the region, confirming their specialized informant status (Bernard 2006).

Table 5.6. Years of Involvement in Group and Northeast Superior Region

	Total # resp.	Years in group				Years in Region		
		5 or less	6-14	15 or more		5 or less	6-14	15 or more
Municipal	6	2	3	1		1	2	3
Provincial	5	2	1	2		2	1	2
Federal	3	1	-	2		1	-	2
Forest Industry	3	-	-	3		-	-	3
First Nations	2	-	2	-		-	1	-
Tourism	2	-	-	2		-	-	2
Baitfisher/Trapper	2	1	1	-		-	-	1
Outdoor Recreation	2	-	-	2		-	-	2
Forest Worker	1	1	-	-		-	-	1
Env./Conservation	1	1	-	-		-	-	1
Consultant	1	-	-	1		-	-	1
Total responses	28	8	7	13		5	4	18

For example, almost half of respondents had 15+ years of experience with their group (including 5 with >25 years). About two-thirds of respondents had more than 15+ years in the NSFC region. Of the 5 respondents with the shortest involvement in the region (5 or fewer years) all held positions with municipal, provincial, or federal governments. Most respondents (18) stated that they had a very good (37%) or good (26%) level of understanding.

5.4.2. Strengths and Weaknesses of Tenure System

Respondents were asked to describe and rank what they thought were the main strengths (up to 5) of the existing tenure system (Table 5.7). Based on the highest frequency of number 1 rankings, about 50 per cent of respondents stated that the top strength of the current system is that it guarantees long-term access to wood fibre, which is deemed important for reducing uncertainty and increasing security for large private investors. Another 20 per cent (2 of 3 from industry), stated that the current system maintains sustainable levels of harvest and forest renewal for a constant supply of timber for production.

Conversely, 40 per cent of respondents believe a major weakness of the existing system is that it limits access to fibre for new entrants and non-conventional uses, namely for those involved in small enterprise, First Nations, and communities. Four of five provincial and the one small industry representative were among those giving this response. Just over 20% of people stated that the current system limits local control in decision making processes; perhaps not surprisingly, all of these respondents were from local government (2), First Nations (1), trappers/baitfishers (1), outdoor recreation (1) and tourism (1). Fewer still (11%) felt community and regional development in Northern Ontario were hindered by the existing system[10]. The two respondents from large industry felt that the current system produced a restrictive business environment.

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[10] When total frequency was counted for weakness statements, the order of the top 3 weaknesses remained the same.

Table 5.7. Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses of Current Forest Tenure System

Rank	Main strengths of tenure system	Freq n=23	Main weaknesses of tenure system	Freq n=27
1	-Guarantees, long-term access to fibre and upholds certainty/security for large private investors	12	-Limits access to fibre for new entrants/non-conventional uses (small enterprise, FNs, community)	11
2	-Ensures sustainable level of harvest and forest renewal for constant supply of timber for production	5	-Limits local control in decision making processes	6
3	-Provides apparatus enabling large-scale, systematic management of Crown forests by private companies -Maintains Public-Private Rapport/Partnership	2 2	-Limits community and regional development in Northern Ontario	3
4	-Supports stakeholder involvement and integration of wider values -Maintains measure of government control and oversight	1 1	-Restrictive business environment	2
5			-Does not promote env. stewardship -Unsupportive fees and licences -Promotes wastefulness of big companies -Creates conflict among licencees -Contributes to false "cozy" relationship between government-industry	1 1 1 1 1

5.4.2.1. Suggested Opportunities for Improvement

On the positive side, 82 per cent of respondents agreed that it was possible to make improvements regarding the challenges they discussed[11]. Most respondents (54%) called for a complete rethinking and fundamental changes to the existing tenure system. The priority in this regard is to enable collaborative decision making and increased regional/local control of forest resource and timber allocations, as well as increased access to fibre for smaller locally-based enterprise.

Community or town managed forests were perceived as a useful alternative. Resource boards were also suggested, presumably with a variety of local stakeholders who decide on

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[11] Outdoor recreation (2), trapper/baitfisher (1), forest worker (1), large industry (1) were among those who did not respond.

where and how wood fibre is to be used. Moving along this continuum, others suggested that a provincial-municipal partnership would be suitable, while some felt that OMNR should retain management control with smaller operations rather than having large corporations managing the forest "under the Crown's watch" (provincial government respondent). In all but two instances (i.e., where OMNR was given priority), respondents envisioned that decisions regarding the allocation and flow of fibre would be made collaboratively by a full range of stakeholders with an equal vote, and or by public entities rather than by a single private interest. The collaborative model was perceived to contribute to decision making that was more democratic and transparent, more aligned with local realities of use and management. Collaboration was also identified as enabling more responsible and efficient decision making, with positive implications for society and the environment. Respondents thought this structure would contribute to quicker decisions about the availability of resources and costs associated with new or proposed opportunities. Such decision making bodies would have the authority to "release" Crown timber to new entrants via competitive processes to make resources and derived benefits "more broadly available". The following statement summarizes the perspective expressed by many:

> A complete reform of the tenure system needs to be investigated. There needs to be a system in place where all stakeholders can come together and make decisions that are in the best interest of everyone involved. A series of community controlled forests and forest co-operatives should be fully examined (municipal representative).

Provincial representatives focussed on the need to create opportunities for "new" or "small" business, suggesting that auctions and/or earmarked fibre allocations would help create this access. A variety of specific additional recommendations was offered:

- Earmark a certain number of hectares of each forest management area for local/regional development (municipal);

- Guarantee licence holders the benefits of allowable cut increases from intensive forest mgt and more government support for more intensive management, especially where communities endorse such practices (industry and provincial);

- Crown should explore short-term tenure/sale of fibre rights by auction on Forest Management Units where the current licence holder is not utilizing the full fibre associated with their tenure (provincial);

- Allow a portion of the forest management unit area/volume to be available to new businesses. If no new businesses are developed then allow the SFL holder to harvest the wood in the last year (s) of the Forest Management Plan (provincial);

5.4.2.2. Awareness of Other Forest Tenure Models

When respondents were asked if they were aware of any other model(s) or form(s) of forest tenure that might be useful improvements for Ontario, less than one half of the people (42%) answered "yes". All five provincial representatives answered "no". Also, five of six municipal representatives answered "no". Most (8) mentioned various models of locally controlled collaborative management of public forest lands in British Columbia, Quebec, and Ontario. Alternatively, one industry representative suggested that 99 year leases should be granted at a nominal cost (after the Australian model) to boost security, intermediate stand management and incentives for long-term investment. One trapper/baitfisher mentioned that "tweaking" the existing system was enough, stating that LCCs and Cooperative SFLs were "making improvements". Overall, no detailed descriptions were provided and respondents did not seem to be familiar with other arrangements (even from elsewhere in Ontario).

5.4.3. Perceptions of the Distribution of Power and Forest-derived Benefits

Respondents were asked to rank a list of predefined forest stakeholders according to who they thought a) *has* the most power and b) who *should have* the most power over public forest resources in the Northeast Superior Region (Figure 5.3). The provincial government (70%) was by far considered to be the most powerful actor, followed by the forest industry (26%) and First Nations (4%). Local residents and the federal government were considered least powerful by one third of respondents. All other groups were considered to hold intermediate power. A significant reshuffling took place when respondents were asked who *should have* the most power: provincial government (57%), local government (22%), and forest industry (9%). First Nations moved to fourth position tied with local residents, and environment/conservation groups. The federal government was again ranked last by most people (45%).

Figure 5.3. Perceived Power Differentials among Forest Groups in the Northeast Superior Region
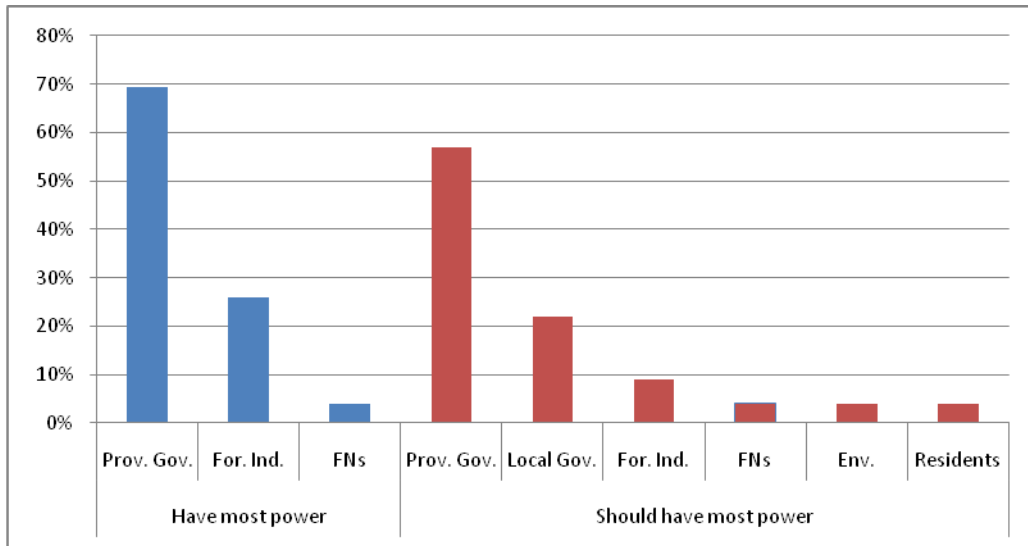
Differences became apparent when comparing the relative change between perceptions of who *has* power and who *should have* power. Percent change was determined by calculating the difference between the number of rankings each group received in higher (1-5) and lower (6-10) rank positions for each category (i.e., has power/should have power). Local residents (+40%) and local government (+39%) experienced the most change (i.e., most people moved these groups to higher positions of power based on who they thought should have more power), while environment/conservation (-32%), outdoor recreation clubs (-29%), the federal government (-27%) and tourism (-27%) were downgraded.

Likewise, respondents were asked to rank the same groups according to which ones they thought *actually* benefited the most and *should* benefit the most from public forest resources in their region (Figure 5.4). The forest industry (66%) was seen to benefit most from public forest resources, followed by the province (16%), and local residents (8%). Once again, one third of people ranked the federal government last in terms of actual benefits. A different order occurred when respondents were asked who *should* benefit most from public forest resources. One half of respondents thought that local residents should be benefitting most. Local government (18%)

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and forest industry (18%) tied for second, followed by the province (9%). First Nations were ranked fourth.

Figure 5.4. Perceived Benefit Disparity among Forest Groups in the Northeast Superior Region
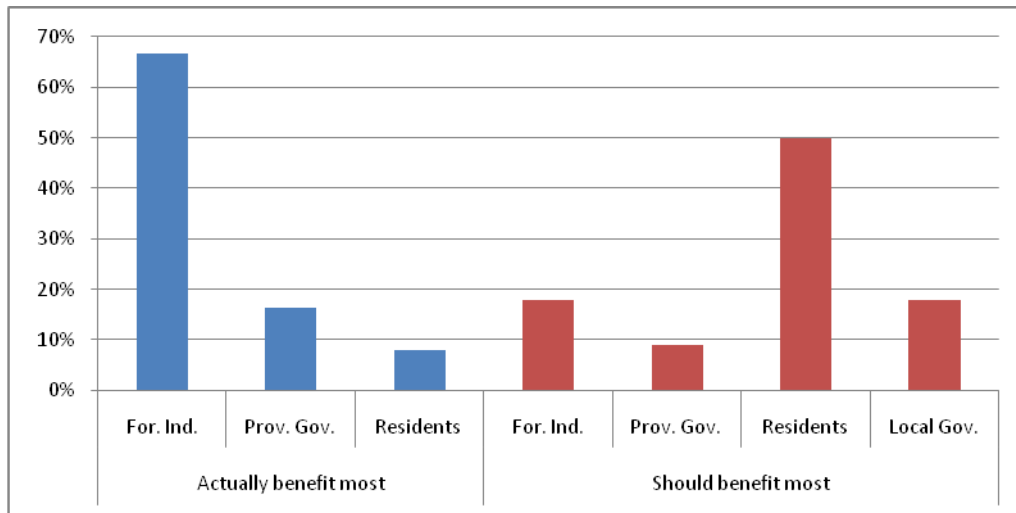
When comparing the change between perceptions of who *actually* benefitted most and who *should* benefit most, local residents (+49%), local government (+38%), and First Nations (+18.5%) experienced the most change, followed by recreation clubs (+16%). On the contrary, tourism (-20.7%) dropped the most in terms of groups that should benefit most. This was followed by the federal and provincial governments (-17%), and forest industry (-16%) as groups also downgraded.

5.4.4. Defining 'Sustainable Forest Management'

Respondents were asked to define sustainable forest management (SFM) in their own words in order to determine how different people in the Northeast Superior Region interpret the concept and to what extent their views reflected current guiding theories. SFM is based on the notions of sustainability and/or sustainable development as conceived at the 1987 Brundtland Commission report. While advanced as "a social ideal worth pursuing" (Francis 2004: 21), at best the approach represents a constellation of principles to work towards but does not spell out exactly what to do (i.e., provide a blueprint) in order to achieve a "sustainable" future state (Mitchell

2002). Likewise, SFM has been referred to as "a magic formula for achieving consensus" and a "vague idea" (von Gadow et al 2000). Lane and McDonald (2002) identify 5 key principles to be the foundations for the present paradigm for forest management (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8. Principles of Sustainable Forest Management (after Lane and McDonald 2002)

1. maintains forest ecosystems, focusing on biodiversity and health
2. considers local to global scales, now and in the future
3. manages for tangible as well as intangible resources
4. openly addresses a strong social component in support of social, economic, and cultural heritage values
5. empowers people by enabling community involvement in forest management decision making

Most respondents (58%) referred to managing all forest resources in a manner that maintains a full range of forest uses and/or benefits to humans, including those valued from ecological, economic and social perspectives. Holistic respect for the 'needs' of the forest ecosystem and biodiversity were a secondary consideration established on the basis of maintaining ecological conditions needed to ensure the continued delivery of ecosystem services to humans. However, four people specifically referred to the importance of protecting forest ecosystem health.

Most definitions (50%) emphasized the perpetuation of timber production by balancing or monitoring harvesting and forest regeneration. This focus on creating a long-term and constant timber supply, while important to meeting future needs, is more in keeping with sustained yield. Moreover, optimizing the quantity and quality of yield was also equated with notions of sustainability (4). Benefits for future generations (7) and local communities (5), as well as local power sharing emerged as social equity concerns for SFM. Results confirm what Adamowicz and Burton (2003) describe as an ongoing over-emphasis on the economic aspect of SFM, which can be attributed to the fact that sustained yield remains the foundation of SFM.

Respondents held a human-centred view of human-environment relations, exemplified by their focus on the human utility of forest 'resource' and maintaining maximum timber supply. This is not surprising due to the high degree of forest dependence in the Northeast Superior Region and the tradition of industrial timber extraction that has prevailed over the past 100 years in many resource-based, single-enterprise towns across Northern Ontario. Overall, respondent

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definitions did not fully reflect current thinking about SFM with regard to acknowledging the need to explicitly focus on multi-scaled and interdependent influences on forest management (i.e., being part of a larger, dynamic social-ecological system) and the need for explicit and increased attention to social equity and ecological health concerns as well as intangible forest values. This finding confirms that the slow adoption of SFM principles, policies and practices must be viewed as evolutionary, rather than a wholesale move away from sustained yield (Adamowicz and Burton 2003).

The above results offer some insights into stakeholder relations in the Northeast Superior Region and how various actors perceive one another in terms of current and desired governance arrangements. There is a perceived need for increased access to fibre for new entrants to create new forest-related opportunities, forest product innovation and 'fresh ideas' for forest management and planning. It is hoped that this will increase diversity in forest economies and communities and help maximize and redistribute the benefits derived from public forest lands. At the same time respondents recognized that maintaining security for existing and new forest industry investors is important to encourage a long-term commitment to development and the viability of forest communities, economies and ecosystems. Thus many respondents indicated a willingness to consider alternatives in light of recent impacts on forest dependent communities within the Northeast Superior Region (see Chapters 6 and 7).

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the provincial significance of Ontario's forest sector with respect to regional disparity in the distribution of forest resources, employment and community dependence. I provided a historical overview of the development of Ontario's forest governance system and described current critiques of the tenure system as well as mainstream views regarding the recent decline of Ontario's forest sector. This was followed by an introduction to the case study site, the Northeast Superior Region. I presented relevant biophysical and social attributes shaping forest and community development, with a focus on the biophysical setting, the local history of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal settlements and forest governance. Recent

demographic and economic changes in the Northeast Superior Region were examined to illustrate hinterland dynamics.

The final section presented key survey results which highlighted some major themes and differences among actors' perceptions of the Crown tenure system, the distribution of control over and benefits from forest resource development, and interpretations of sustainable forest management. Survey results indicate that there are numerous and often competing perspectives concerning Northern Ontario's forestry challenges and what should be done to remedy current problems. In the context of sweeping mill closures affecting the Northeast Superior Region, there are individuals within the forest industry, government, municipal politics and administration as well as local forest user groups who embrace and defend the conventional industrial forestry model. There are, however, others from these same groups who want fundamental changes to the nature of power relations among different forest groups.

Chapters 6 and 7 discuss evolving social framings of the 'forestry crisis' and power relations emanating from human-forest relations in the Northeast Superior Region in general and Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation in particular. Results from the qualitative analysis of interviews, media and policy documents as well as direct observation are presented to elaborate how certain perspectives become dominant or marginalized and how these social framings shape multiparty remedial efforts and outcomes.

CHAPTER 6 – FRAMING THE 'FORESTRY CRISIS' IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

6.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the different social framings of the 'forestry crisis' produced by actors with varying perspectives and political motivations. I illustrate how traditionally marginalized groups, namely municipal officials, First Nations, non-traditional forest products users and NGOs, came together in alternative forums and spaces created by a failing industry to re-imagine human-forest relations and reframe the 'forestry crisis'. This included emphasizing local control and values, place-based identities and collaboration. My objective is to understand the views and interests that dominant framings 'shelter and propagate'.

In the first section, I analyze the social framings of different actors embedded in print news media, reports and websites for the period of the unfolding crisis, from the 2001 Softwood Lumber Dispute flare-up, until the provincial announcements for tenure reform and ministerial reorganization (fall 2009). The second section draws on interviews with actors from the Northeast Superior Region to assess different framings of problems, solutions, identities and the forms and sources of power at work during the crisis. This analysis sets the stage for Chapter 7, where I discuss the emergence of the NSFC.

As presented below, perspectives on the problems and possible solutions vary, but at least two main positions have emerged. As introduced in Chapter 5, the dominant and conventional framing is that changing economic forces have driven the few large companies that control most of the fibre supply in Northern Ontario to scale back operations or close. 'Outside' forces are blamed for the industry collapse that has deeply affected forest-dependent communities. In contrast, for some local residents and forest stakeholders, the fundamental cause(s) of the problem is different and more pervasive. Their view is that internal resistance to change is the main problem and solutions will necessitate wholesale changes to the structure of regional forest economies and power relations believed to limit community and regional development. Their bottom-up response to the crisis involves developing new understandings of problems and solutions through unconventional discursive forums forming outside of forest industry advisory committees, forest plan review open houses, and government offices.

6.2. Dominant Framings of the 'Forestry Crisis': Events, Actors and Perspectives

6.2.1. Early Signals: The Storm Warning (2001-2002)

Forest industry representatives, mainly executives, managers and lobbyists, and the popular news media were instrumental in the initial framing of the 'forestry crisis'. It began with framing the difficulties for the forest sector alone and was labelled very early on as an economic crisis for industry. Rising costs associated with the Softwood Lumber Dispute mark the beginning of what was eventually collectively referred to as the 'forestry crisis' in Northern Ontario. In 2001 the Softwood Lumber Dispute was escalating as American penalties on Canadian softwood imports reached 32 per cent. Martin Michaud, vice-president of Tembec's Northern Ontario operations at the time described the situation to the *Northern Business News*: "We're swimming in red ink" (*Northern Business News*, March 2001:4). As a single prominent issue affecting industry, Michaud framed the problem as a government-to-government conflict affecting neighbouring markets: "It's totally political. It has nothing to do with free trade, and it prevents the U.S. consumer from having the best deal." These comments characterised the American government as the main villain. Canadian producers and American consumers were portrayed as caught in the middle. Early calls from industry for 'swift action', such as these from Tembec's vice-president, were aimed at the Canadian government: "somebody better move fast because how long can we be expected to survive in this marketplace?" Under the headline *Survival of the Fittest*, then Minister of Northern Development and Mines, Dan Newman, confirmed provincial support when stating, "The Ontario government is fighting for a return to a system of free trade, where Ontario's softwood lumber manufacturers can compete fairly in the American and international markets" (*Northern Business News*, March 2002: 9).

At that time, a Tembec spokesperson indicated that there was "good co-operation among employees to cut costs" (*Northern Business News*, Dec 2001), suggesting that some Northern Ontario workers were sympathetic to industry's cause. By March 2002, forestry employees in the Northeast Superior Region had not experienced any layoffs. Domtar spokesman Marc Perrault attributed the persistent operation of Northern Ontario lumber mills to "good management and good inventory control" (*Northern Business News*, Dec 2001: 21). As trade talks advanced, *Northern Business News* reported that a "united" interest-based coalition of

federal and provincial governments, softwood producers and industry associations was committed to fighting the Americans together (*Northern Business News*, March 2002: 9).

Initially, community problems received brief mention in the mainstream media, and were usually used to justify and instigate government action. By early summer 2002, layoffs and closures were affecting northern towns. On June 21, 2002, OMNDM Minister Jim Wilson appealed to federal Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew for community adjustment funding to assist northern communities beyond unemployment insurance support, citing that "time may be running out for many Northern Ontario communities where hopes still run high, but the potential onset of pain is imminent." The letter restated Ontario's commitment to find "a long-term durable solution to this problem and that Ontario would be willing for talks to resume if the U.S. indicates a willingness to be reasonable" (*Northern Business News*, July 2002: 23). Senior governments were seen as responsible for the trade problem, which was framed as an economic problem for industry. In late July 2002 there was cautious optimism among local industry and municipal leaders when the World Trade Organization ruled in favour of Canadian softwood producers. The preliminary ruling would make it more difficult for the U.S. to justify "punishing duties" that averaged 27 per cent (*Timmins Daily Press*, July 27, 2002: 1).

By fall 2002, the problem and solution continued to be framed in an economic, market-oriented manner. In November 2002, under the headline *"Northern Softwood Mills Riding Out the Storm"*, U.S. softwood penalties were a "major financial burden" for Tembec's mills (*Northern Business News*, November 2002: 24). Seemingly over-optimistic in hindsight, Tembec's Gord Wilson stated: "We think the market has bottomed at this point...." While profits were apparently "non-existent", the company was adjusting by "cutting costs, cutting costs and cutting costs." Tembec claimed that "all of our employees are aware of that, and they understand what we are up against". The company again uses 'we' to refer to the both the management and forest workers under the same interest-based identity. Also in November 2002, a major employer in the Northeast Superior Region, Dubreuil Forest Products, shed 20 workers, citing rising costs associated with the softwood dispute and rising energy costs (*Sault Star*, November 6, 2002: A11). Dave Jennings, General Manager for Dubreuil, reported that the mill's energy costs had jumped from $2.1 million to $5 million per year with Ontario's move to deregulate the

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energy sector. With 570 workers, the 20 lost jobs were a small layoff but an early sign of what was to come in the region.

6.2.2. Increasing Turbulence and 'The Perfect Storm' (2003-2004)

By 2003, forest companies and communities were experiencing increasingly turbulent conditions and adopting various metaphors to explain their challenges. For forest companies, the economic situation further deteriorated into what Jim Lopez, executive vice-president for Tembec, referred to as "a poisonous atmosphere for sawmills" (*Northern Business News*, July 2003: 17). In the same article, representatives from major forest companies collectively identified the convergence of three main economic challenges as affecting their businesses, namely, the rising Canadian dollar, fibre supply shortages (especially for paper producers that depend on fibre from sawmills) and softwood lumber penalties. Buchanan's Hartley Multimaki pointed to Ontario's Living Legacy land use plan and guidelines for habitat protection and fire emulation for decreasing supply by removing forest lands from the eligible harvest area. Ontario's Living Legacy was announced March 1999 to expand Ontario's park system. The goal was to protect 12 per cent of the land base. 65,000 Ontario residents participated in the Lands for Life consultations, which contributed to the Ontario Living Legacy Land Use Strategy. This planning process has been criticised for the way First Nations were involved and the inordinate control of environmental organizations (i.e., World Wildlife Fund, Wildlands League, Federation of Ontario Naturalists) (Smith 2007; Ballamingie 2009). In addition, Carl Grenier, executive vice-president of the Canadian Free Trade Lumber Council, advocated for the softwood producers stating that if the federal government was "not going to stand behind the industry", forest companies would be at "a big disadvantage". Senior governments were seen as not doing enough and in fact contributing to the problem. Also implied was that the prescribed ecological measures were bad for business. The main problem then, as defined by the dominant industry, was basic economics. Sue Prodaniuk, spokesperson for Bowater, summarized, "Add these factors and soon it no longer becomes profitable to operate".

Mill closures and increasing uncertainty sparked public questioning of business and senior government intentions, as well as the basis of popular economic explanations (e.g., productivity, operating costs). A string of layoffs and indefinite closures began in early 2003 in

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the Northeast Superior Region. On March 13 2003, Dubreuil Forest Products announced it would drop one shift affecting 150 workers, bringing its total layoffs to 170 since November 2002 (*Timmins Daily Press*, March 15, 2003: 2). An 80 per cent average increase in energy costs and OMNR's reduction of industry wood supply were blamed. Dubreuil's Forest Products Manager commented:

> Difficult times call for difficult decisions and decisions about closures are never easy.... This, I feel, is the best thing our company can do here to help maintain our competitive position and remain viable and be prepared to return to full production once the wood supply constraints have been eliminated, the electricity has been sorted out and we're ready to go.

Dubreuilville and Wawa had appealed to the province and Great Lakes Power for months prior regarding regional disparity in power rates and the negative impacts on residents and business. Wawa Reeve Doug Wood stated that the layoff was "a prime example" of low government support, and that Wawa only wanted "to be treated equal and have the same power rates that the rest of Ontario is getting" (*Timmins Daily Press*, March 15, 2003: 2).

As the layoffs continued, managers and labour representatives publicly disagreed about the rationale for closures. On May 23, 2003, Domtar announced it would shut down its White River mill for six months. Effective June 23, the temporary closure affected 283 workers. Domtar spokesperson William George cited flooded lumber markets, decreased demand and U.S. duties on Canadian softwood for the closure, calling the situation "a real killer" (*Sault Star*, May 26, 2003: B2). Speaking from Montreal, George also said the White River mill was the only one of 16 Domtar mills to be closed and needed to become more efficient. Local union officials were puzzled, given that the mill was considered the envy of the industry due to close proximity to its wood supply: "There are other mills that have to haul wood for hundreds of kilometres that are still operating" said Joe Hanlon, president of IWA-Canada Local 2693 (*Sault Star*, May 26, 2003: B2). Chapleau's Weyerhaeuser sawmill also closed temporarily for six weeks, effective June 2, which affected 125 workers (*Sault Star*, June 13, 2003: A1).

As forest companies adjusted their operations in efforts to maintain production, residents, workers and municipal leaders reacted to increasingly unstable local conditions by mobilizing

available resources for short-term relief. More bad news came on June 13 when Dubreuil Forest Products announced another 180 workers would be laid off, reducing its total workforce to 110. Echoing a popular metaphor being used by industry leaders and OMNR, Dubreuil's Dave Jennings explained the industry was in a "perfect storm" which presented two options: "one is to shut down, that's our cheapest option but as a company, that's not what we're about... We're about finding ways to make our operation more efficient and to make sure we're one of the ones surviving when this thing is all over" (*Sault Star*, June 13, 2003: A1). The rash of closures led Wawa Reeve Doug Wood to comment: "it's becoming a depressed area" (*Sault Star*, June 13, 2003: A1). The *Sault Star* reported that adjustment committees funded by senior and municipal governments, First Nations, labour groups and industry had been set up to help residents of Dubreuilville, White River and Pic Mobert First Nation to cope with the sudden change. According to a local union member, in addition to services for stress and financial management, career planning and resume writing, White River's centre "basically gave [laidoff workers] a place and something to do and not sit at home and not worry about their bills". With a combined population of 4800, the three towns had lost 750 high paying direct jobs in three months.

To this point, all criticism was levelled towards the provincial government for ignoring the increasingly 'poisonous', 'stormy' or 'deadly' business environment, and industry and municipal leaders believed that mass unemployment was being ignored by provincial leadership. In response to White River's closure, Mayor Angelo Bazzoni stated, "The first thing our municipality is trying to do is get the ear of the provincial government; I don't think we have it in Northern Ontario" (*Sault Star*, May 28, 2003: B5). Bazzoni had sent a letter on May 27, 2003 to Premier Ernie Eves requesting aid for the Northeast Superior Region. By August, the Northeastern Superior Mayors Group was meeting with provincial deputy Ministers from the OMNDM and OMNR in Sault Ste. Marie to request an "interministerial task force be developed to resolve the economic crisis facing the area" (*Sault Star*, August 18, 2003: B3). But by mid-September 2003, the local representatives were frustrated, as expressed by Wawa Reeve Doug Woods: "Unfortunately it appears the province is not willing to move as quickly as is required" (*Sault Star,* September 15, 2003: B3).

The complexity of the larger 'crisis' became apparent as more voices entered the debate. With increasing job loss, major labour unions surfaced in mainstream media for the first time regarding this issue. Cecil Makowski, vice-president of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union, also called for an economic task force on the "tremendous economic disaster being visited upon the communities around Northern Ontario... The entire economic engine of Northern Ontario is grinding to a halt" (*Sault Star*, July 25, 2003). Pointing to the "proactive response" to Toronto's outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in April 2003, the provincial government was again being criticized, albeit this time by labour: "We cannot sit idly by while more Ontarians are thrown out of work, while children leave Northern Ontario due to lack of opportunity and while communities wither and die" (*Sault Star*, July 26, 2003: A5). The weak response of the senior government was also contrasted with the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) crisis at this time. A notable difference in this framing of forest sector problems is that labour identified with the interests of Northern Ontario, communities and children. The problem was scoped to include the concerns and interests of forest towns directly, siding labour with 'northerners' rather than being solely united with industry. At the same time, labour and youth outmigration and business closures were occurring due to extended layoffs and imminent closures in Northeast Superior towns.

Dissenting voices of local control advocates were occasionally amplified across the provincial north at this time. Laurentian University economics professor David Leadbeater was publicly critical of the forest companies' rationale and motivations for job cuts as being short-term and profit-based: "They just don't ring fully true... You can look at it from the viewpoint of a stock analyst in Toronto, but you can also look at it from the viewpoint of a municipal councillor or an employee. There is a difference in orientation" (*Northern Business News*, Sept 2003: 17). Pointing to overdependence by the region on a "small number of very powerful transnational corporations", Leadbeater stated "there has to be a shift in the balance of power and our provincial and federal governments have to be more active in doing something about this." Earlier in the year, guest columnist to the *Sudbury Star*, Stan Sudol, questioned why, with growing outmigration and economic need in the north, two-thirds of Ontario's value-added wood manufacturing jobs were in the Greater Toronto Area? He claimed the north remained fixed on

harvesting and commodity production which made "most northerners bristle with anger" (*Sudbury Star*, January 31, 2003).

Calls for attention to alternatives, such as increasing local control of forests and fostering opportunities in value-added wood processing, were overshadowed by worker recalls, layoffs and takeovers across the provincial north. In the Northeast Superior Region, Dubreuil recalled 24 workers in August and another 15 in September 2003, which turned out to be temporary because another 35 were laid-off in November. Dubreuil's General Manager told the *Sault Star* (November 4, 2003: B10) that the layoffs were made "to improve economic stability for the future and to ensure the survival of our community and our industry".

Municipalities became desperately optimistic with corporate restructuring impacting operations in neighbouring towns. On October 31, Tembec took over Weyerhaeuser's Chapleau sawmill. Tembec's President and CEO framed the takeover as a strategic opportunity to provide a secure long-term fibre base for Marathon Pulp (Tembec) and "much needed consolidation in the softwood lumber industry in North America" (*Tembec Press Release*, Oct 31, 2003). As a standalone mill for Weyerhaeuser, it had to either operate efficiently or shut down. Chapleau councillor Richard Bignucolo expressed support for Tembec's purchase: "We haven't heard such positive news in a long time... They are community minded and add a sense of stability to our community..." (*Chapleau Express*, November 2003). In early fall 2003, the Domtar sawmill in Chapleau had dropped a shift, citing a shortage of large-diameter logs, which contributed to the sense of instability.

In January 2004, after a week of discussions between management and union members, Domtar announced that 230 workers would be called back to reopen the White River mill. One union representative responded, "We have to maintain a good morale and a good relationship with the mill to make sure that it's running, and the woodlands, to make sure we're making a profit" (*Algoma News Review*, January 21, 2004). But in March 2004 Domtar announced the Chapleau mill would drop a second shift affecting 64 employees. This time Chapleau Mayor Earle Freeborn characterised the community as being "in shock and disappointed" (*Algoma News Review*, March 17, 2004). A local Labour Adjustment Committee was created by the Ministry of

Training, Colleges and Universities to assist unemployed workers. Under the auspices of The Chapleau Regional Economic Development Corporation (CRDC), Economic Development Officer Dr. Sylvie Albert also organized 'Business after 5' meetings in early April 2004 to address excessive "speculation" among area businesses regarding the future of Chapleau's forest companies and to promote local purchasing policies (*Chapleau Express*, March 2004). Domtar's manager of corporate communications and external relations attributed that layoff to

> ...additional pressures being put on the fibre sources through new parks and protected areas, so there's even less out there. When you put all these things together, we're stuck with a situation where we just don't have access to the fibre at a reasonable cost for us to operate the two shifts (*Algoma News Review*, March 17, 2004).

Dubreuil Forest Products' Dave Jennings publicly criticised the province regarding similar wood supply challenges on the front page of Wawa's *Algoma News Review*:

> Unfortunately the policies of the MNR don't appear to be supporting wood supply jobs in small communities.... The provincial policies with respect to natural resources, and the MNR looks after all natural resources, are not supporting that [wood supply and local jobs] and it's very troubling.... Ultimately there has to be some sort of revitalization of policies in place. We have to somehow convince government that all natural resource industries are vital to the economy of Ontario, they're vital to the economy of Canada and I mean that's what keeps communities in Northern Ontario (*Algoma News Review*, April 28, 2004).

Despite uncertainty, municipal representatives were continually sympathetic to industry challenges related to fibre supply. For example, in late February 2004 Wawa received bad news from the OMNR that it had rejected a 2002 proposal from Wawa Forest Products (part of Buchanan Group). A proposed hardwood allocation would have brought a $30 million facility and 150 jobs to the community "with no industrial base" (*Algoma News Review*, March 2, 2004). Bill Thornton, OMNR Director of Industry Relations Branch, was quoted as saying that the request for proposals was purposefully designed to attract one business that could make use of poor quality wood scattered across 10 management units between Blind River and Manitouwadge (roughly 550km). He further explained:

> ...we always find ourselves in a situation where we don't see the benefits to Northern Ontario of encouraging the establishment of a new mill where it's [sic] financial viability

is questionable from the beginning and where the wood supply appears to rely on quantities and of quality of crown timber that isn't available.

Soon after, Wawa Mayor Rod Morrison told the Minster of Natural Resources Doug Ramsay that, given the magnitude of the decision, he was "somewhat disappointed" and "slightly insulted" that the news came from industry relations staff: "I felt that this decision on the government's part was so big, so serious, that it could have come from him as minister." Municipal leaders also expressed discontent with the lengthy duration of discussion between industry stakeholders and OMNR officials on new guidelines for conservation areas and the amount of forest available to harvest, suggesting that the "MNR has to become more proactive in trying to work with companies in preserving the jobs" (*Northern Business News*, July 2004: 17). Wawa and Weyerhaeuser representatives were also later concerned for wood supply shortages that could negatively affect the existing Oriented Strand Board facility. Mayor Rod Morrison recognized the importance of the facility to the town: "You're the backbone. We're going to have to do everything we can to preserve the strength of that backbone" (*Sault Star*, January 28, 2005: A7).

6.2.3. The Industry Response: Corporate Reorganization (2005-2006)

In November 2004, the Minister of Natural Resources finally responded to industry and municipal calls for action by appointing 17 private, public and civic representatives to serve on the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness. The Council was asked to "identify measures to be taken in order to avert significant adverse economic and social consequences" (MCFSC 2005). Heavily weighted with forest industry representatives (6 of 17), the committee also included 3 northern mayors and 2 First Nations, 1 Toronto-based environmental organization (Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society), as well as a forest industry business consultant, a major lender (CIBC) and one senior forest scientist. Meanwhile the debate among industry, governments and labour groups on the problems and solutions continued around a limited set of forest industry-centred economic factors affecting the efficiency and competiveness of large-scale industrial operations.

Early in 2005 the calamity facing the forest sector was collectively framed by labour, industry and government as a real and unprecedented 'forestry crisis'. "The forestry industry is

in the deepest crisis in its history in this province," said Cecil Makowski from the Union of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers (*Northern Business* News, 2005: 4). Under the headline *Northern forestry industry faces challenges, forum hears: Lumber mills closing or moving, others facing rising costs*, Tembec's Chief Provincial Forester Rick Groves stated "The forest industry in Ontario is in the midst of its most challenging period in recent memory". Bill Thornton, Director of Corporate Relations with the OMNR, made an equally blunt assessment: "It has been a long time since the sector has experienced changes as profound as what will take place this year" (*Sudbury Star*, February 18, 2005: A2). Jamie Lim, a vocal industry lobbyist with the Ontario Forest Industry Association (OFIA) and former Timmins mayor, publicly blamed the Province, warning that competitive disadvantages would drive the sector to collapse: "and it's not because the sector's dying but because the government let it. That's the truly sad thing" (*Sault Star*, June 14, 2005: A3). Tembec's Rick Groves observed that more constructive relations needed to be fostered: "Government and industry cannot lob bombs at one another, accusing one another of creating the situation, but instead suck it up, make tough decisions, and move forward." Seeing a need for change, he suggested both sides needed to "Look at this as an opportunity. Investigate maximum revenue from the forest -- not just traditional product" (*Sudbury Star*, February 18, 2005: A2).

At the same time, industry restructuring was hinting at a future with fewer, high-capacity 'super mills' operated by fewer employees. A Domtar-Tembec merger was announced. According to Jim Lopez, president of the Tembec Forest Products Group, "we have no other option but to adapt and make the right choices, which are fewer more efficient large mills that are capable of attracting capital investment" (*Canadian Forest Industries*, January-February 2005). Weyerhaeuser spokesperson Sarah Goodman commented:

> It's the way of the world, what with companies changing names and refocusing.... The fine paper business has been a challenging business to be in of late. We see some electronic substitution and whatnot, so we clearly needed to put together a strong set of assets to compete from a position of strength. (*Northern Business News* 2005: 4)

Restructuring actions were framed as unavoidable rather than as simply decisions made to preserve companies, reinforcing the idea that corporations were being forced by external factors to make these moves. Tembec's Rick Groves observed that half of the 33 regional softwood

sawmills had closed over a period of 30 years and that "only a few families remain in control of mills that were once family-dominated" (*Sudbury* Star, February 18, 2005: A2).

In some towns, corporate restructuring created alternative opportunities. In the Northeast Superior Region, on January 5, 2005 Domtar announced it would permanently close its Chapleau mill, shedding 81 jobs (*Algoma News Review*, January 26, 2005). As part of the restructuring, Tembec's Chapleau sawmill would gain wood supply and be adding a third shift with about 20 jobs. A Domtar press release stated "in keeping with its corporate values, the Company would do its utmost to help employees affected by today's announcement" (*Domtar Press Release*, January 17, 2005). Chapleau Mayor Earle Freeborn was quoted as saying "we never saw it coming" (*Algoma News Review*, January 26, 2005). About one week later, Chapleau Cree First Nation and Mayor Freeborn met with Minister Ramsay to table a proposal for a new cedar mill, which received provincial support pending assessment of available fibre. The town hoped the new facility would offset other closures. A Domtar representative (Industry 3) reflected on the company's role and position regarding the closure and future opportunities:

> We worked with Mayor Freeborn because when we closed the mill we didn't want to just leave the town in complete chaos. I mean it *was* in chaos, but part of us leaving Chapleau as an example... we dismantled our sawmill and cleaned up the site. We donated half of the property to the town. The transaction was for a dollar to give them serviced industrial land and so we turned that over to the town. They have the ability now to go out and attract new business. So... we worked with the cedar sawmill and we sold the other half of our property and some buildings and some equipment for a very nominal price. So when we permanently closed Chapleau... you know we're leaving town... we made sure that part of that wood supply was transferred to Tembec to help Chapeau because it helps the economic viability of that Tembec mill. It's no surprise that Tembec mill continues to run on three shifts, while that helps to provide that strong primary anchor to the town.... I don't know how successful they've been, but they have the opportunity.... That's the best we can do.

Tembec Manager Mel Jones later publicly stated that the town was supportive: "The mayor and council have recognized that it is better to have one very efficient mill versus two mediocre mills that are subject to the ups and downs of the industry" (*Logging and Sawmilling Journal*, November 2005).

For a time, there was growing corporate and political support for the dawn of a new era in forestry operations in Northern Ontario—one that contrasted smaller, often locally-owned, long-term businesses with high volume processing facilities. Expressing his support for the Domtar-Tembec consolidation, Minister Ramsay told *Chapleau Express* (January 22, 2005):

> We now have a supermill in Chapleau that's going to provide sustainable jobs in the next 30 to 40 years in that operation... So, it does mean that probably every town that maybe has a small mill is not going to continue. But what we can do is have these major mega-mills throughout Northern Ontario and then supplement those forestry jobs with smaller value-added operations that are labour intensive and create a lot of employment.

In contrast, a few months later, after 57 years of operation, Pineal Lake Lumber near Chapleau closed in mid July, dropping 15 workers (*Chapleau Express*, June 11, 2005).

Despite the Minister's optimism, the prospect of amalgamation did nothing to settle concerns for already shaky operations. Competition between mills and towns for wood fibre was ongoing. Management from Weyerhaeuser at Wawa met with Minister Ramsey in January 2005 to share concerns that Montreal-based Kruger Inc. would be getting an allocation for a new expanded facility to replace two older facilities in Longlac, Ontario: "Right now there's enough wood out there for us – we are not in a crisis state... Our concern is if another 500,000 cubic metres of wood is allocated to somebody else, will we have enough wood at that point?" (*Algoma News Review,* February 2, 2005). The ministerial response was to hire an independent review of the wood supply in February 2005 to ensure that fibre was available. The company and town asked Algoma-Manitoulin MPP Mike Brown for support who stated: "my job is [to] make sure that we have good supply for the mills in my constituency and they're not jeopardized by other areas" (*Algoma News Review*, May 18, 2005: A1). Wawa Mayor Rod Morrison was also concerned about forest inventory data and possible implications for the town:

> I can accept the minister making the decisions - I can accept that he got professional advice from these consultants and his staff and they know a lot more about forestry than I do however there is a gap between what the scientists say and what the operators are telling me... The wood that comes into the mill is not the same wood that's scientifically calculated to be in the forest – sometimes there is a 30 per cent gap between what they say is out there and what's at the mill gate.

Mill closures, buyouts and new initiatives from competing businesses and government to start forestry operations in neighbouring towns raised insecurities among mill managers and local representatives. At this time Northeast Superior towns were still hoping that idled mills would eventually reopen when market conditions improved.

Meanwhile, the prospect that wood flows could be redirected away from weak or idled mills was a major concern for forest workers and their families, and municipal staff. Jamie Lim, CEO and president of the Ontario Forestry Industries Association, later publicly deflected criticism of industry by appealing to a wider forest interest-based identity and definition of the crisis presumed to be held by residents, workers and industry: "You can't draw lines in Ontario when it comes to forestry... This affects all of us and everyone has to be concerned. The industry is in crisis across the province and there could be more of these kinds of announcements within a week" (*Timmins Daily Press*, December 16, 2005: A1).

Part of what would become the emerging local control movement, Saving the Region of Ontario North Group (STRONG) was formed in March 2005 by laid-off mill workers and residents to combat the very issue of redirecting fibre flows away from mills in the proximal towns. STRONG outlined its position in contrast to conventional views held by many in industry, government, workers and by mill town officials:

> In our opinion it is not only the economic realities that have caused hardship in the forest and mining industries. Federal and provincial policies have been implemented that continue to disregard tangible solutions put forward by the communities and the people of Northern Ontario.... All of our natural resources including the forests, the rivers, and the minerals belong to the people of Ontario, not to the companies that have been given the privilege to develop them on our behalf.

STRONG was one of the first of several self-organizing groups to challenge how the forestry crisis was framed by industry and governments. STRONG urged local workers to mobilize and provided an expanded view of the problem and solutions—one advocating for local control and benefits, and the reversal of traditional corporate and senior government dominance.

6.2.4. The Government Response: Aid for Industry (2005-2007)

Over the next three years (2005 through 2007), various committees, working groups and task forces including representatives from industry, government, labour, municipal and Aboriginal groups [i.e., Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness (2005); Ontario Forestry Coalition (2006); CEP/USW Task Force on Resource Dependent Communities (2007); Northwestern Ontario Economic Facilitator Report (Rosehart 2008)] commonly cited five economic factors as contributing to the ongoing problems in Northern Ontario's forest industry since about 2001: 1) the American dollar fell by 48 cents relative to the Canadian dollar between 2002 and 2007 (Bank of Canada 2009); 2) decline in demand for housing materials and newsprint [e.g., American housing starts fell by more than half between 2005 and 2008, from over 2 million to 900 000 (US Home Builders Association 2009)]; 3) increased American duties on Canadian softwood lumber and increasing global competition from low-cost producers reduced demand for forest exports; 4) energy costs in Northern Ontario had increased sharply, including a 50 per cent increase in diesel costs between 2003 and 2008 (OMEI 2009) and a 30 per cent average increase in electricity costs between 2003 and 2006 (NRCAN 2006), and 5) access to industry-desired fibre volumes and types had become problematic in Northern Ontario. Distance between wood supplies and mills was increasing (NRCAN 2006) compounded by a forecast 80 year supply shortage of softwood and poplar (ECO 2005). Combined, the above pressures decreased demand for provincial forest products and increased industrial operating costs, contributing to widespread layoffs and closures, thereby adversely affected numerous northern companies and communities.

Senior governments responded with forest sector reports and aid programs, which critics deemed to be long overdue and insufficient. As part of the provincial government's response, the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness report was submitted to the government in early June 2005. Citing the forestry crisis and framing the industry as the "economic bedrock of Northern Ontario" on the first page, the report offered 26 recommendations to alleviate industry challenges surrounding wood supply, delivered wood costs, energy and encouraging investment. Commenting on the report, *Northern Business News* (July 2005) staff observed that the "forestry stakeholders group might not have achieved total consensus on what ails Northern Ontario's struggling forestry sector, but almost all agree Queen's Park needs to act quickly to

come to the industry's aid". While the report met mixed reviews, the government acted upon many of the recommendations (discussed below). Nevertheless, Meakin Forest Enterprises president called for the government to recognize their common ground with industry, stating: "We are not two separate identities... We need [the MNR] to be more conciliatory towards the forest industry and realize [forestry] is their bread and butter as much as it is ours." Furthermore, feeling that their perspectives had not been addressed through their participation on the Council, First Nations Economic Development Officer Byron Leclair said "If the Ministry wants to stick their head in the sand, then they are not addressing the real issues" (*Northern Business News*, July 2005). Neither the Ojibway of the Pic River nor Industrial Wood and Allied Workers of Canada signed off on the final report. Industry giant Domtar was critical that the report did not address industry's problems "head-on".

Nonetheless, the first of three major provincial initiatives was announced in June 2005 with the unveiling of a $350 million loan guarantee program to promote forestry investment and modernization. Following the announcement, Minister Ramsay confirmed that "Ontario's fragile forestry industry will receive help from the provincial government within a month... The forestry industry is in crisis... It's very important that the government step in and help..." (*Timmins Daily Press*, August 17, 2005: A5). Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty explained that the assistance "would act not as a bail-out, but rather as an incentive for new investment that'll put our industry on a more competitive footing... I think our specific responsibility is to help through this transitional period" (*North Bay Nugget*, August 18, 2005: A6).

In September 2005, another $330 million in grants was made available through the Forest Sector Prosperity Fund, intended to encourage company expansion and modernization. Feeling that the government was again failing to address industry's challenges, Tembec executive vice-president James Lopez called for broad public support in a special letter to the *Sudbury Star* on October 7, 2005 entitled "Province lets North's forest industry down". Lopez evoked strong identity frames linked to place and interests and a shared forestry heritage to try to unite workers with industry:

> For more than two centuries, the forest industry has demonstrated tremendous ability to create jobs and prosperity in Northern Ontario... And now [it] directly employs more than

84,000 Ontarians, second only to the auto industry and its 90,000 workers. But today, its dynamic legacy is in danger.... In recent years, a number of government decisions and indecision put the forest industry at risk. The sector now faces a crisis like never before.... The only way the entire forest industry can secure employment for its workers is to restore the industry's ability to compete. We have to work together to convince the entire government to address *our concerns* now. (*Sudbury Star*, October 7, 2005: A11)

Union leaders were also disappointed with the government's response, which they saw as "pathetically anemic to the challenges that face this industry" (*Peterborough Examiner*, October 22, 2005: A4). Industry and labour groups were not terribly explicit in the media about their prescriptions, but they appeared to want policies that would provide short-term stability during a period of rapid change (i.e., cheaper electricity and diesel through rebates and guaranteed access to fibre, and the liberalization of forest management planning and environmental policies seen to affect operation costs (i.e., 'cut red tape'). Instead, the government was seen to be offering incentives for reinvestment to assist with inevitable transformation in the sector, which needed to 'run its course'. Minister Ramsay was quoted as saying "I think in the end we'll probably have the same number of jobs in the forestry sector but they're not going to be the same and in the same places" and that "the industry will adapt, but no amount of government money will stop the change" (*Owen Sound Sun Times*, October 22, 2005: A4).

Federal aid programs intended to respond to nation-wide challenges in the forests sector again met with mixed reviews from industry and the political opposition. In December, the Liberal federal government announced the Forest Industry Competitive Strategy, which would provide 1.5 billion dollars to softwood producers affected by the U.S. tariffs through tax breaks and loan insurance to support and encourage the development of new technologies and product markets. Having cut another 45 workers in November, Dubreuil Forest Products was "pleased" with the federal aid package (*Algoma News Review*, December 7, 2005: A1). New Democratic Party candidate for Algoma-Manitoulin-Kapuskasing, Carol Hughes, criticized the federal Liberals for the slow response and waiting to act until an upcoming election was inevitable (*Timmins Daily Press*, January 17, 2006: A1). In February 2006, the provincial Liberals revealed another $220 million in industry aid to assume costs for road construction and maintenance and reduced stumpage fees (*Timmins Daily Press*, February 23, 2006: A1). Industry and labour groups justified the move by saying that the roads were public and so

construction and maintenance costs should be assumed by the province. But labour groups also remained critical of provincial programs, claiming they "did not save a single job" because they "did not adequately address the two issues identified by all the stakeholders as the *real* cause of this crisis: the high costs of harvesting wood and energy in Ontario (*Pembroke Daily Observer*, January 12, 2006: 2). A much later announcement that a 140 million dollar energy rebate would be given to pulp and paper producers in November 2006 was the last industry support program. Livio Di Matteo, an economics professor at Lakehead University, stated it "won't make much of a difference" (*Sault Star*, November 21, 2006: A9).

One after another, government aid programs were announced and condemned by industry, government opposition, labour leaders and academics. At the same time, the voices of residents and First Nations remained largely unheard in the mainstream discourse. However, self-organizing groups of actors were emerging that represented new and conventional perspectives and values.

6.2.5. The Local Response: Reframing the North, Communities and Forests (2005-2007)

The persistent downturn in Ontario's forest sector and perceived failings of senior government leadership sparked the formation of several local and regional groups containing private-public-civic actors. From mid-2005 to mid-2007, notable differences emerged in the views, affiliations and motivations among different actors. It was during this period that the Northeast Superior Mayor's Group was working on a new economic development strategy and preparing a proposal for the Forest Communities Program that would lead to the formation of the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation. The focus of Chapter 7, the NSFC and Northeast Superior Regional Chief's Forum were two of several collaborations that materialized in response to the forestry crisis to address the perceived needs of different actors, many of whom felt they were not represented in the mainstream industry-centric discourse.

Emergent civil society organizations represented a cross-section of interests and values including individuals and organizations from municipalities, First Nations, social welfare groups, labour, conservation groups, academics and timber interests. After the formation of the pro-local and worker-oriented STRONG in northeastern Ontario, some northern business and municipal

leaders formed the Ontario Forestry Coalition (OFC) in summer 2005. A coalition of forest industry associations, northern municipal associations and a First Nations development fund, members purportedly shared a "common purpose of promoting and enhancing the Ontario forestry sector's ability to continue to create jobs and economic prosperity in Ontario" (OFC 2006). The Coalition was reportedly led by the Northern Ontario Municipal Association based in Thunder Bay (Common Voice 2007) but its head office was (and still is) the Ontario Forest Industry Association in Toronto. OFC contributed to The Common Voice Northwest Initiative, which addressed regional challenges associated with a perceived lack of effective governance, economic development, and infrastructure. The Common Voice also wanted greater regional independence and "realistic Northern solutions". Despite obvious links to industry, the group claimed: "The Ontario Forestry Coalition, which is led by NOMA, has been working on behalf of *all communities* in the Northwest to get other orders of governments to respond in a way that will prevent further layoffs and assessment loss" (Common Voice 2007). The group was concerned for the future of Northwestern Ontario, but this raised questions about representation for citizens and communities both in terms of their geography and interests. The objective was clearly to maintain existing mills and provide a tax base for northern towns. The Coalition was seen by one interview participant as "basically the front group for industry" and status quo mayors (NOSCP 1). Addressing overarching themes such as education, natural resources and transportation, The Common Voice did however advocate for the creation of a policy research institute and a research, investment and development corporation to establish the Northwest "as the locus for new government/industry forest management and manufacturing research institutions in order to assist in the retention and attraction of new investment to the Northwest" (Common Voice 2007).

Labour groups played an important role early on by staging independent public forums to address local concerns, document community experiences, and lobby senior governments with alternative solutions. By summer 2006, unions were calling for meaningful public involvement to broaden the debate and help address issues facing forest communities in Northern Ontario. This placed the unions firmly on side with the growing local control movement. In September 2006, the *Timmins Daily Press* (September 28, 2006: A5) reported: "the union is calling for a separate hydro authority in the north, cutting rights turned over to local stakeholders when a mill

closes and a [northern] provincial forestry office." The unions then created their own public forum. The CEP/USW Taskforce on Resource Dependent Communities (Butler et al 2007: 2) was formed and weeks of public meetings and discussion during the summer of 2007 culminated in these perspectives:

> Northern Ontario is a land of emptying mills and job losses. Tens of thousands of workers, put out of work by plant closings of sawmills and paper mills, are leaving Northern Ontario for jobs elsewhere.... Many Northern Ontarians are dissatisfied, not just with the situation in the forestry industry but with the state of our political debate regarding the forests. Our communities deserve a debate that prizes substance over rhetoric, and we deserve a forest policy that is adequately funded and sustainable.... The provincial and federal governments must address the forestry crisis....

The Task Force (Butler et al 2007: 4) recommendations called for increased provincial advocacy for the North through assigning a Chief Provincial Forester and having the OMNR and OMNDM be "champions" for mill towns enduring closures; creation of a regional energy utility and pricing in support of northern economic development; improvement of forest resource inventories; a northern investment fund to assist the forest industry to transition to the "new economy"; and, perhaps more importantly, tenure reform and modification of the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* to "ensure more involvement by community stakeholders and workers". As an alternative way forward, the report openly concentrated on questions surrounding necessary transformation in the forest industry and communities and focussed on structural issues such as tenure reform and development of the carbon/bio-economy, rather than asking for money to assist companies which were biding their time, waiting for market conditions to change.

While conventional industry was seen to be suffering "a slow death" due to high energy prices (*Sault Star*, May 10, 2006: A10), a growing number of actors (e.g., Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives 2006; Robinson 2007) were offering similar policy advice on tenure reform, the need to develop value-added products and manufacturing, NTFPs and 'bio' economies, as well as northern capacity. Concerned with the limits of debate and response to the ongoing crisis, the Northern Ontario Sustainable Communities Partnership (NOSCP) was another pro-local control group to emerge in November 2006. It represented a broad group of town councillors, economic development and First Nation representatives, academics, non-

government organizations and the general public. An inaugural member remembered its inception and purpose:

> The organization came out of the forestry industry crisis in Northern Ontario... I mean it's been the talk of the town... and there were a group of us that came together in a very informal way that were unhappy with what we saw just as the public response to this industry crisis and particularly some of the things like the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness, and the establishment of a couple of groups in the Northwest [i.e., Common Voice]. And the whole response seemed to have blamed government and then asked government to step in and fix the problems to make things go back to the way they were... We needed a deeper examination of why things had gone wrong, and that in fact the very structure of the forest sector was part of the problem. And, so we started looking at are there alternative things that we can do? And that's when we started becoming a bit more formal, we got together and we developed our charter, our community forest charter, looking at tenure reform as one of the major problems. (NGO 3, community)

In late 2007, NOSCP offered the Northern Ontario Community Forest Charter to promote community-based decision making for public forests in Northern Ontario. Drafted in the summer of 2007, it laid out a set of rights and responsibilities for Northern residents and communities, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, concerning human-forest relationships:

> The people and forests of Northern Ontario are intimately connected. The forests of Northern Ontario provide crucial environmental services, as well as significant social and economic benefits, for the region, the province of Ontario, Canada and the world. Recognizing the contribution of and challenges to existing forest-based industries, northern communities are ready and willing to assume responsibility for the shared stewardship of northern forests in light of growing environmental, economic and social challenges. (NOSCP 2007)

Clearly diverging from the interests of conventional industry, NOSCP's vision included the separation of forest management from mills; the creation of locally controlled community forests; respect and assistance for resolving Aboriginal and Treaty Rights through collaboration with First Nations; further protection of forest health; and fostering rapport with senior governments. The Charter was intended to address what they considered deeper issues underlying the forestry crisis and to provide an alternative framework and terms for local actors who were willing to collaborate as stewards and developers of public forests in Northern Ontario (NOSCP 2007). The Charter was endorsed by STRONG soon after its release.

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At this time, pro-northern and pro-local sentiments fuelled calls for self-reliance and grassroots action in northern media and towns, urging forest towns and residents to become empowered and defend their perceived rights, responsibilities and heritage concerning public and northern forests. For example, *Northern Ontario Business* (January 2007) managing editor Kelly Louiseize offered an opinion under the headline "Protecting what defines the North":

> We cannot afford to be so passive-aggressive as to let what defines the North be taken away, without batting an eye. Protecting the socio-economic fibre is what will ensure these resources stay around for years to come, and who better to steward them than the communities and the region who depend on their tax base.

Northern economists Drs. David Robinson (Laurentian) and Livio Di Matteo (Lakehead), and Michael Atkins, President of *Northern Ontario Business*, provided additional motivation as part of an article series entitled "Rethinking Northern Ontario" (*Northern Ontario Business*, October 2007: 5): "The North is dominated by big companies (most of them losing money) and big government. Neither party is in any mood to think creatively. They are either trying to survive financially or respond politically in crisis mode to layoffs." Al Simard of STRONG provided equally compelling sentiments:

> As it is now we don't have any say in the management of our forests.... Since we formed in 2005 we've said communities that depend on those forests should have a say instead of allowing a company to do whatever they like.... We have to become one collective voice because there doesn't seem to be enough co-operation and unity between Northern communities. (*Timmins Daily Press*, October 12, 2007: A3)

The Common Voice (2007) group made a similar call for grassroots action:

> [Northwestern Ontario] can continue to rely on the Provincial and Federal Governments to respond to legitimate requests from the region and hope that the answer is both timely and appropriate to the expressed needs. Or, it can chart its own course by taking on those challenges and developing its own solution.... Northwestern Ontario is... a region that is unique in the Province of Ontario.... The complex decisions affecting the Northwest are best understood and made by those who live here. The strongest voice for this vast and magnificent region comes through the strength of a consensual union of common interests.

The emergence of groups such as STRONG, Common Voice, NOSCP and the Northeast Superior Mayors Group marks a significant amplification of local and regional voices calling for a shift in northern and mill town identity away from the culture of dependency in forest

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communities related to provincial-industry driven resource development. Regionally, there was a growing political appetite for increased local control in several sectors.

At the same time, alternatives were reluctantly addressed by traditional industry supporters, who maintained the status quo. For example, statements by industry supporters worked to create uncertainty around value-added processing and tenure reform. In a public presentation to discuss plans for the formation of Cooperative Sustainable Forest Licenses, a former OMNR assistant deputy minister turned consultant, Ray Riley, stated that "community control of resources is not in the cards" (Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal, March 17, 2007). OMNR was already working to reform the tenure system by creating 'super SFL's' by consolidating existing large-scale licenses to be managed by groups of companies that would share reduced costs. Presented as a way to broaden community stakeholder participation, decision making would be limited to those parties that could 'pay to play', which would largely exclude most towns and First Nations from the newly created "Co-operative" SFLs. Speaking about the future of Ontario's industry and opportunities to develop unconventional products such as wood oils and plastics, Avrim Lazor, president and CEO of the Forest Products Association of Canada, told the *Toronto Star* (August 4, 2007: ID7):

> Ontario and Canada will remain 'hewers of wood'. If [value-added] was feasible here, it would happen here.... The future lies in extracting and the first and secondary level of processing, not going up the value chain. There are a million jobs in the logging industry. There won't be a million jobs in that stuff.[12]

Conversely, economists Drs. David Robinson and Livio Di Matteo believed "It is no longer enough to be 'hewers of wood'.... We've never stopped to see what it would take to change our assumptions, our habits and our vision from a traditional resource extraction economy to a proactive, innovative solutions-oriented society" (*Northern Ontario Business,* October 2007: 5). Chapleau's cedar mill proponent Wade Cachagee also embraced the idea of value-added: "We think there's going to be a turn in the forest sector.... We [industry] have to start creating more products with the resource that we're using. We [Niska] plan on using a lot less fibre to create a

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[12] Curiously, this was the first article in a major Toronto newspaper to discuss forestry challenges specific to the provincial North.

lot more jobs" (*Northern Business* News, March 2007: 38). As new actors entered the discussion, new terms and understandings of the forestry crisis were introduced. Problems and solutions were being reconsidered to broaden and further contextualize the events and main issues that had been for years centred on solving economic troubles laid out by forest companies as *the* way forward for communities around the provincial North.

6.2.6. Collapse and Renewal in Northeast Superior Region (2007-2009)

In 2007, the forest industry and communities in the Northeast Superior Region faced total regional economic collapse. Earlier in 2006 a mine closure in Manitouwadge and untimely down time at Olav Haavaldsrud in Hornepayne (fire) had left an additional 370 people unemployed. Subsequently, White River, Wawa and Dubreuilville all lost their major forestry employers. On January 12th, 2007 Domtar spokesperson Lynne Gibson announced it would wind-down operations in White River affecting 236 workers over the course of the year:

> The operations at the White River Sawmill have been suspended indefinitely as of January 12.... This year, 2007, is forecasted to be a tough year for the industry, this closure for an indefinite period, is expected to last fairly long (*Sudbury Star*, January 12, 2007: A5).

It looked as though Conifex Inc., a newly formed eastern Canadian sawmilling company, would take over the Domtar operation. However, the deal was subject to the transfer of licensing rights and fell through when the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources withdrew Domtar's forest licence rights for its Grand-Remous and Malartic sawmills. Also in January, ForestCare in Wawa closed and relocated its green houses and 3 full-time positions to southern Ontario, also shedding 60 seasonal jobs (*Sault Star*, July 18, 2007: A6). Then, in May 2007, Weyerhaeuser spokesperson Laurence Pillon announced from Vancouver that the company would be moving to a "modified operating posture" due to the decline of the U.S. housing market, dropping 20 workers indefinitely from its plant in Wawa (*Algoma News Review*, May 3, 2007).

Conditions worsened in late October 2007 when Weyerhaeuser head office announced that the Wawa mill would be closed indefinitely; 132 employees were severed and provided with counselling and job transition services (*Algoma News Review*, October 24, 2007). Weyerhaeuser chairman, president and chief executive officer Steven Rogel explained the closure: "These are

difficult decisions and are not a reflection on the hard work of our employees.... They are the result of today's challenging business environment." The closure of large wood processing facilities was accompanied by immediate negative consequences for spin-off and supporting businesses. After 6 years in operation, Norwa Manufacturing wood pellet plant also closed because it depended on waste fibre from Weyerhaeuser. MPP Mike Brown for Algoma-Manitoulin linked the closures to "forces beyond the government's control", further stating that he would "work with community and business leaders in the area to bring in as much assistance as possible from the province" (*Algoma News Review*, October 27, 2007). In mid-November, Dubreuil Forest Products announced it would idle its sawmill and layoff its remaining 140 workers until the end of January 2008. Responding to the closures, Wawa Mayor Howard Whent called for more senior government support and explained the municipal response, identifying the nascent NSFC as part of the solution:

> The temporary closure of Dubreuil Forest Products not only affects our neighbours in Dubreuilville, but like Domtar and White River, affects many of our residents as well who work there either directly or indirectly. Wawa is the service hub for the region and any loss of income in the area affects our businesses as well. The Government Agencies have been very quick to respond. However, it is time that the senior levels of government come to realize that this is more than just some 'temporary glitch' that will go away.... We are doing [our] part as evidenced by the continuing efforts of the area municipalities (Northeastern Superior Mayors Group) to work together such as the newly created regional Forest Community Board under the [Natural] Resources Canadian Forest Program. (*Algoma New Review*, November 14, 2007)

However, workers were not called back as was anticipated. In response to the ongoing layoffs, Dubreuil Forest Products employee and Dubreuilville Mayor Helene Perth hoped the mill would "eventually start again so that the workers in my community will get back to work" (*Sault Star*, January 31, 2008: A7). Dubreuilville Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Monique Ouelette bluntly stated, "our community is in crisis and certainly the population is very worried of its future". Dubreuil Manager Dave Jennings said that conditions beyond the company's control had caused the closure, adding: "The entire forest industry is experiencing some of the most difficult economic conditions we have ever seen."

The string of closures and reorganization confirmed the frustrations held by many local groups. In October 2007, Dr. Peggy Smith, a Registered Professional Forester and Assistant Professor with Lakehead University, framed the problem as seen by local control supporters:

> We have been tied into a system that leaves us dependent on the whims of large, mainly foreign owned companies. Those companies have operated with the blessing of provincial governments of all political stripes to take timber from publicly-owned lands, secured through long-term, large-area, evergreen licenses, export the timber they harvested in semi-processed form, with over 80% going to the U.S., without ensuring that people in resource dependent communities (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) have a say in the management or direction of the industry. (*Algoma News Review*, October 3, 2007)

With the forest industry in ruins, a provincial commitment to develop green energy sources from renewable resources was received by local control supporters as one positive solution. Biomass 'waste' products such as the branches, bark and tops of trees were seen as a residual fibre stream that could potentially support new opportunities such as biofuels, wood pellets, and wood-fired co-generation plants, which would eventually create electricity and steam for industry and towns. These alternative energy projects were cautiously viewed as a win-win for governments, industry and towns that were looking for cheaper, cleaner and renewable sources of energy as well as for projects that could boost local economies by reinventing old operations and/or starting new ones. Steadily rising fuel prices, the crash of the American housing market and ensuing world economic collapse forced the energy issue.

While most mills were idled and insolvent, mill licences were being handed back to the Province, freeing up previously allocated fibre. On January 1, 2009 the Ministry of Natural Resources announced it would take the first step towards making forest biofibre available in keeping with the green energy agenda and efforts to revitalize the forest industry. This included a request for expressions of interest to use available Crown wood resources from across the province. Minister of Natural Resources Donna Cansfield suggested, "It's not a different view for the forest industry, but it's an added view... The industry may not look the same as it did in the past" (*Timmins Daily Press*, January 22, 2009). But, by spring 2009, *The Working Forest* (Spring #2, 2009: 4) claimed that forest industry investors were reluctant to adopt this new direction: "'Show us the money,' has been a demand to the government from industry players

that have the investment capability and the fibre. The political motivation of the wood pellet supply for electricity has provided a lot of scepticism". Companies trying to survive the crisis remained protective of long established fibre allocations and operations and evidently were not eager to head in a new direction.

Provincial decision makers were also pressed to examine options for reforming the Crown forest tenure system due to questions surrounding access to biomass and pressure from communities, First Nations and some in the forest industry to reallocate wood from idled mills. Several events and publications emerged from governments, First Nations, community groups, academics, and forestry professionals calling for a significant rethinking of Ontario's Crown forest tenure system, indicating increasing acceptance for the need to change. This contributed to two key moves by the province.

First, on April 22, 2009, Minister of Natural Resources Donna Cansfield announced to participants at the Ontario Professional Foresters' Association 52nd Annual Meeting in Sudbury that the tenure system would be reviewed. However, Judy Skidmore, publisher of Ontario's forest industry newspaper *The Working Forest* expressed industry's concern that "provincial governments will take back dedicated industry working forest regions. The reduced harvest and closed mills will give the anti-industry communist element in the government an easy grab for new 'wilderness'" (*Working Forest*, Spring #2, 2009: 4). The expansion of Ontario's park system had recently removed land from the harvestable land base which in some areas exceeded the 12 per cent protection goal. For example, according to one interview participant from industry, the Northeast Superior Region approached 16 per cent (Industry 7). Weakened industry players in Ontario were familiar with B.C.'s 2003 decision to claw-back 20 per cent of the annual cut from large holders for redistribution to new and small players, including First Nations and community forests and were concerned that similar reductions could occur in Ontario.

Second, on June 23, the Premier announced that the economic aspects of forestry (i.e., industry relations) would be reassigned to the renamed Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry. This move was intended to recognize the role of forestry in northern

development and provide a champion in government for the forest industry. These major announcements resulted from years of socio-economic difficulty and conflict among many forest actors. As the tenure system has yet to be overhauled (provincial changes ongoing since March 2009, see Table 1.1.) the implications of these moves are too early to detect.

While many actors contributed to these pivotal changes, the 'forestry crisis' and the meanings surrounding the situation link different actors with different perspectives, political motivations and power. The next section outlines the main social framings advanced by conventional industry and local control supporters, and integrates the frames of interview participants in the Northeast Superior Region (May 2008 and July 2009) to update and enrich this analysis of evolving discourses surrounding Northern Ontario's 'forestry crisis'. The following discussion also helps to synthesize 'high level' public perspectives with local narratives as an entry point for analyzing the emergence of the NSFC.

6.3. Current Social Framings of the Forestry Crisis: Conventional Industry and Local Control Movement

6.3.1. Conventional Social Framings of the Forestry Crisis

The aforementioned events and perspectives represent different sides of an evolving debate about whether the conventional industry of 150 years should be maintained and rebuilt or dismantled and transformed to increase local control, collaboration and benefits. Each position holds different assumptions about the roles of different actors; the distribution of forest-derived benefits among local, provincial and international private-public-civic actors; how forests should be used in terms of the values that should be emphasized; and who should be in control of the forests and how decision making occurs.

Discussed below, the perspectives of interview participants provide an updated and localized analysis of the 'state of the debate'. The subsequent analysis shows that actors mobilize identity and characterisation frames according to how they view themselves and others fitting in with their understanding of the problem domain and possible solutions. Power frames point to who/what is considered to be powerful and the forms and sources of power at work. As demonstrated by the interviews and by previous research (Gray 2003), some hold more

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developed frameworks than others that reflect an awareness of other, often competing, views. In this way, people can hold incomplete understandings and contradictory frames, and frames are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

The basic positions of the dominant conventional framings and the emerging local control movement are outlined below with reference to development of the 'forestry crisis' (previously outlined) and actors' reflections on their recent experience in the Northeast Superior Region (from interviews) and outcomes.

6.3.1.1. Conventional Diagnostic Frames

> The crisis in the forest industry right now is simple. The selling price for lumber—and it's all based on supply and demand—is well below our production costs. Now a lot of this red tape... high energy, high delivered wood costs... all contribute to higher production costs. The closer we can get those production costs to the selling costs, gets us out of the crisis much sooner or earlier. (Industry 2)

> Sure... easy. At its heart the problem is that the forest is owned outside the region in the sense that it's owned by the province of Ontario and is leased to producers so that the relationship is between increasingly outside producers and outside owners. Now we don't think of Toronto as foreign ownership but if you recognize that Northern Ontario... it's simply historic accident that it's not a province like Saskatchewan in which case it would have its own government. In which case the tax revenues from forests would stay in Northern Ontario... all those things are obvious. You realize that essentially you have a colonial resource economy. Revenues are extracted to pay for institutions in the south mostly. The problem though... when you put it that way... [is] clearly a tenure problem. (NGO 1, community)

These statements outline different diagnoses of the forestry crisis and articulate core views held by sponsors of the *conventional industrial* and *local control* discourses. These statements were made by prominent representatives from each side of the emerging conflict when asked to define the main problem(s).

As is apparent in the first statement, and in many of the statements expressed in the above analysis, the conventional industry social framing defines the 'forestry crisis' as a narrow set of problematic market and pricing conditions further complicated by provincial policy challenges that drive up production costs and reduce profits (Table 6.1). Given these conditions, Northern Ontario is an uncompetitive environment. This conventional perspective is heavily informed by

economic base theory and the comparative advantage principle, which have influenced Canada's and Ontario's approach to regional development since the 1800s. Regions specialize in the production and export of commodities that make use of abundant factors of production, which in Northern Ontario implies natural resource intensive (i.e., high timber volumes) forms of production. Under this model, economic growth is determined by external demand.

The basic entities are the inputs of production (i.e., capital, people, land/resources) and commodity markets that link self-interested private producers and investors to paying customers. Balancing inputs through increased efficiency relative to market prices is essential to staying profitable. As discussed later, this set of challenges stands in marked contrast to the diagnosis provided by local control supporters.

Table 6.1. Conventional Diagnostic Frames

How is the problem(s) defined?	• Poor markets; high production costs; lack of competitive environment in Northern Ontario created by unsupportive policy
Who/what is primarily to blame?	• Provincial government, external forces, anti-industry lobby

One industry representative described the common outlook of conventional industry:

> We've got to recognize that within Ontario certainly our practices and the amount of lands that are protected are significantly greater than the areas around us. And because of that we always have to watch that we're balanced as to not get out where our costs are too high. (Industry 4)

Another industry representative explained a variation of this perspective as it was imparted to him by an industry "old-timer", which he wrote on the chalk board in the meeting room during our conversation: "There's four Fs to this business... Fibre, Fuel, Folks and Fx [currency]" (Industry 8).

From the conventional perspective, the 'forestry crisis' or 'perfect storm' is viewed as directly linked to a combination of external forces beyond industry's control (i.e., market collapse; foreign-imposed trade tariffs; foreign competition, currency fluctuations; oil prices) as

well as to domestic or internal shifts such as labour costs due to rising standards of living and working conditions, electricity costs, and access to an affordable wood supply. For example:

> ...when I look at Ontario, from the forestry perspective we're very uncompetitive. Ontario is. We have some of the highest wood costs and energy costs. Some of the largest red tape, complicated, convoluted policies, government policies that really inhibit how we can do business. (Industry 2)

> Well I think the forest industry in Northern Ontario is similar to the forest industry around the world. It's held ransom... it's a commodity. It's not a value-added product, it's a commodity and it's at the whim of the world commodity prices.
> (Province 5)

In this framing of the problem, ecological and social issues associated with operating on public land are also considered yet another set of 'values' to be reduced and measured as monetary costs by foresters and business managers (e.g., public involvement processes for plan development, environmental assessments, following ecologically-oriented management prescriptions, funding adjustment committees):

> Certainly one way to keep it from being competitive is to continue to... I'll call it... to have conflict over forestry. So the more conflict you have over forestry, the higher the costs go. (Industry 4)

> With the new environmental laws that are out and the bump up process... they had two individuals bump up the last forestry plan... cost the company three quarters of a million for one bump up... that's when you delay the forest management plan because you think there's something in it that is not right... that you think the MNR and the LCC are not addressing your concerns, so they bypass the LCC and go right to the Ministry of Environment. It is just a simple letter saying 'I don't agree. I want you to look at it'. So they delay the forest management plan for two years and they can't cut on that forest. And you gotta find outside wood or work at a new plan, which causes more damage than good and expense. (Industry 9)

Seeing some internal factors as within their sphere of influence, industry supporters blame the provincial government for policies that create an unsupportive business environment, namely high regional energy, fibre and to some extent, labour costs associated with forest management planning and production. The above analysis of print news media shows that the provincial government was continually blamed by industry, municipal leaders and labour groups for actually causing the crisis and for its perceived slow and weak response. Externalizing the causes also placed responsibility for the problem and solutions with other actors.

6.3.1.2. Conventional Prognostic Frames

Since interviewees holding a conventional diagnostic frame defined the problem as an economic forestry crisis, corrective actions and actors were identified in keeping with industry interests (Table 6.2). Remaining operational and profitable in challenging conditions requires changes to what industry feels can be changed in its favour, and preferably for the least amount of it own money. As evidenced by the over $600 million in provincial programs introduced during 2005-2006, this has involved lobbying for government aid and trying to influence policy changes to reduce 'red tape' for process efficiencies (e.g., streamlining the forest management planning manual), as well as working to gain efficiencies through tweaking current in-house operations:

> Government has to step up to the plate and give the existing businesses that are there... help them change. Change into something that can be more profitable or another type they can do with their business.... So the government needs to help, to say: 'okay we know you can't do this anymore or he won't survive... but here's some programs that are going to help you.' (Industry 9)

Table 6.2. Conventional Prognostic Frame

What action(s) must/should be taken?	• Both industry and government need to become more efficient; supermills; cut red tape and bureaucracy; better market wood products to increase demand; tweak tenure system
Who must/should be responsible to act?	• Government has been slow to react and unsupportive; industry to become more efficient with support from workers (and town when called upon)

As shown in the previous section, balancing input factors meant increased downtime, layoffs and closures, and consolidation were also part of the response:

> We have to have a facility that competes because... your marketing... your competition today has evolved so it's global. And in order to compete at that level you need to have a facility that has a cost structure that can compete. So as you try to balance that, there is a desire to have a small mill in every community, but unfortunately they don't compete. (Industry 4)

> The economics near the end did not work for productivity issues associated with the White River mill. (Industry 3)

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Industry representatives stated that working to increase demand for wood as a building product was a big part of the solution (Industry 2, 5). Secure long-term access to fibre was considered essential to mitigating uncertainty for ongoing production and investment. Even though licenses are evergreen (i.e., continually renewed), they fall short of providing the security investors desire to make long-term business decisions. For example:

> ...the SFL holders and ourselves, we have a fibre commitment from the forest and we're not going to let that go easily. If we knew that the Crown was going to keep the same available forest there for the next 20 years we would have a level of comfort. But we don't know that and there are more parks now... this endangered species act... there's this and that... you're dealing with less [forest land] every year... (Industry 1)

> You can do all the intensive silviculture that you want to [it] does not guarantee that the SFL is going to be there for them in 60, 80 years. So [companies] just do the minimum because they all really know it's not really theirs. (First Nations 2)

Reinvestment and research and development for product and market diversification were additional options but were not considered good risks during uncertain financial times and perhaps not the domain of industry but rather others in the technology and consulting industries. Nor were value-added manufacturing and the bioeconomy considered viable solutions for existing commodity producers. In general, sponsors of the conventional view were restrained in their views about this potential and the role it could play in northern development. The traditional resource economy was regarded as the past and future foundation and alternative uses, including those for energy production (e.g., cogeneration; wood pellets) were seen as smaller scale, niche and a part of the solution rather than a panacea for the industry, for example:

> I don't think that the solutions are all these little value added... There's a place for that don't get me wrong.... But what I'm saying is you absolutely need a strong primary forest products industry for any of these guys to exist. (Industry 3)

> People talk a lot about value added stuff. Value added is simply adding labour to a component to increase its value. For me I think that opportunity is very limited. And the only reason why is our distance to markets. (Industry 2)

Wanting to protect previous investment and established interests, both industry and some forest community residents and representatives wanted to maintain the status quo and get back to 'normal'. This is where company and community interest-based identities aligned to support mutually preferable solutions:

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...if the forest industry is doing well and there are jobs out there, the communities do well and people do well and it just flows down from there. If you're making 20 million a year you can afford to support different [community] groups. When a company does well the people do well. There's room for raises, there's room for bonuses. (Industry 2)

Diversity... I'm all for it. Diversity builds stability. But at the same time I also believe there's nothing better for a White River or Chapleau or a Wawa than a strong primary industry, because all those other people will feed off of it. (Industry 3)

I don't care if the system changes, I just care that my husband gets back to work, and that we can continue to live in the north. (Municipal 10)

That mill doesn't open up in the next year, this town is going down.... It's gotta be the mill as our biggest thing. (Municipal 13)

These industry, small business and municipal representatives and others recognized the past contribution of forestry operations to the community's economic base and looked to the future based on the same model. Several others also looked to immediate extraction-based and industrial opportunities to save their towns, including aggregates, mining, bulk transportation and energy production (Province 1; Municipal 4, 8; Forest Worker 4).

6.3.1.3. Conventional Identities and Characterisations

Ontario's resource development has long been geared towards provincial revenue generation, which calls upon private investors to develop forest commodities to supply American housing markets. As discussed in Chapter 5, this has contributed to the development of large-scale industrial forestry operations and a provincial bureaucracy to service the dominant industry. Based on capital investment alone (and so defined in economic terms), companies seemingly have the most to lose in terms of direct investment in forest operations, and in some cases company town infrastructure (e.g., road and hydroelectricity). This situation has placed companies (and OMNR) in a position of inordinate control over northern forests and populations, as administrators and stewards of forests, forestry operations and company towns. Characterisations of industry and OMNR clearly point to this perceived role: "You know, the power brokers are the politicians, the bureaucrats, the Ministry of Natural Resources I call the 'government of the north', and you know the big industry players" (NGO 3). At the community level, the dichotomous roles of OMNR as the forest resource regulator and local residents as forest inhabitants are symbolized in roadside murals about forest fire prevention (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1. OMNR Mural, Marathon, Ontario

Companies also contribute greatly to municipal tax assessments where mills are located within town boundaries (e.g., White River). The paternalistic identity of the company is evident when industry representatives speak about their roles and responsibilities in communities and to finding solutions to the crisis. For example:

> ...there's no doubt that the mill is an economic driver for the community and without it there's many other things that start to fall apart within the community and so it's important to try to keep operating. Can we keep operating and manage till things turn around? We are certainly hoping so. (Industry 5)

> So for us there are 1000 people who rely... their jobs rely on us. (Industry 4)

Recognizing this dependence as well as their lead position on SFLs, industry representatives saw themselves as the ones who must make 'the difficult decision' to determine a town's future (Industry 1, 2, 4, 5).

This framing of the problem as economic and forest industry-specific also positions industry and government representatives—mainly foresters, engineers, business managers—as

the experts (Table 6.3). Many industry representatives described themselves and their colleagues as the professionals needed to manage the forest:

> We got a general manager, we have an office manager, plus accounting and administrative stuff and then three foresters... and we look after this forest, right. We do all the forest management planning, FSC, audit, deal with the public, First Nations, liaise with government. We're responsible for all the health and safety with the contractors. We hold the licence for the forest.... You have to have professional people doing the work. (Industry 7)

> I see us, and I say us as the forestry industry, as professionals in what we do. And it takes a lot of knowledge and ability. And I don't believe communities can run businesses like businesses can run businesses. (Industry 2)

> ...our other important mandate, and we still hold it as the SFL holder for the White River forest, we will manage and maintain that forest on behalf of the Crown on a very high level.... We don't just have technical professional foresters, we have technical professional biologists we have technical planners, GIS. (Industry 3)

This identity of the forest professional has endured in Canada for nearly a century, as has the structure of forest governance that gave rise to it initially (see Chapters 2 and 5).

Table 6.3. Conventional identity frame of the expert forestry professional

Who is frame sponsor relative to the problem?	• the forest experts; manager of the forest for the Crown; professionals; the tough decision maker; provider; good business people; tenant

People who were somewhat indifferent to the local control movement questioned the self-supporting identity of 'the forestry professional' and made links to entrenched views and practices that have historically dominated human-forest relations (Table 6.4). These individuals were from OMNR, federal government and First Nations, and were familiar with a range of forest actors in the Northeast Superior Region:

> Perhaps not everybody in MNR shares the same vision nor has the same values that the foresters have and I'm being very respectful here... they very much have a common vision and perhaps a vision that equates down to volumes off a given area. But there are so many other components that encompass sustainability. And when you look at the forest management planning manual, foresters embrace all those other cultural values out on the landscape. But I say they embrace them through a lens. There are many other lenses that that same process and end-product can be viewed through. (Province 8)

There is still a *forestry* management... not a *forest* management... even though it's called the forest management plan, let's make no mistake about that and I don't care if you quote me. The bottom line is that the forest is managed from a forestry perspective first.... Forestry is harvesting wood. (Federal 3)

Even though my forester will say, 'oh yes we know exactly how we're affecting the land we can measure everything that we're doing...' But in reality First Nations people have proven over and over again that you don't really know all the facts and how we're affecting the planet by cutting everything down. (First Nations 3)

Participants pointed to the shared 'perspective' of forestry professionals and that it was not shared by all with an interest in forest use. These views were coupled with a perception held among representatives from industry (Industry 2, 7), municipalities (10,11,12,14), First Nations (2, 3), tourism and environmental NGOs (4, 5) and others that consultation and planning processes occur within a technically complex operating environment that is by design the domain of conventional forestry professionals, whether in industry, government or consulting. This was thought to reinforce forestry professionals' position of dominance relative to local residents, other forest users and workers.

Table 6.4. Characterization frames: The expert forestry professional

Positive and negative views of others relative to the problem and solutions?	• technically focused; authoritative; hard science; disciplinary

As one local control supporter observed, the conventional focus on commodity production and the structure of the tenure system has "limited local people from getting involved in the sector except as, you know, workers" (NGO 3). In keeping with the conventional social framings, the 'northern resource town' and 'mill town' evoke strong interest-based identities and characterisations that are part of a cultural narrative shaped since European settlement (Table 6.5). Many participants shared stories that have been told and retold about their culture, family and local histories, and identified a relationship among resource industries, workers and their towns, and the forest:

We are here because of our sawmill. We are here because of our rail. Our town would not exist without those things. (Municipal 16)

For years we've relied upon mining and the forest sector and that's how we've seen it. (Province 6)

My parents came here in the late seventies. MNR had an office here. CP Rail was doing well. So they worked at the mill. (Municipal 12)

Forestry, mining and tourism all have an economic value and it's critically important to Northern Ontario that they all exist. (Municipal 11)

...this is an industrial land base that we're living on for the most part because logging is pervasive. It's everywhere. (Municipal 14)

Table 6.5. Conventional Common Identity Frames: The resource or mill town

Who is frame sponsor relative to the problem?	• Resource dependent; extractive; industrial

An important observation is that three of the above individuals were recent post-secondary graduates who had either returned to or stayed in Northern Ontario to take entry-level positions. They mobilized similar interest-based identity frames produced through common experiences of living in the provincial North, which shape their future thinking and actions as professionals. Four of five were municipal representatives as well, pointing to conventional identity frames reproduced among the local administration and leadership. For many dependent upon the forestry sector, whether forest workers, managers, OMNR employees, forest consultants or in support industries, the conventional view of the forest is that of the 'working forest', 'fibre basket', 'wood garden' or simply 'the resource'.

A municipal leader from northwestern Ontario participating at the March 2009 Northern Ontario Sustainable Communities Partnership (NOSCP) workshop in Thunder Bay on tenure reform highlighted the issue of the company town culture of dependency: "the company has always taken care of us". Residents and workers are accustomed to a subordinate working class identity fostered over generations and through a tradition of resource development that has provided high paying jobs and often created opportunities for younger, less-educated residents (Table 6.6). Several participants linked disadvantaged characterisations of 'the forest worker' to the history of dependence and impacts of the forestry crisis, for example:

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And what happened too with the sawmills was twenty year ago, you know you didn't need no education... you just walk in there and work, work, work. But now you know today there... all these people are thirty-five, forty years old... they got no grade twelve and they're not educated. And they're stuck here. It's sad, like back then the mentality was the mill's there... go in there and make lots of money... grade eleven... work full time. (Municipal 13)

At that time, times were different. You didn't need to get grade twelve to go work at the mill. Back in high school days they made grade ten, right 'I can spent two hours on the bus or get twenty bucks an hour with [the mill]' and now they're go'in 'I'm kicking myself. (Province 1)

Oh my God there's so many times working in that mill when I said... 'why did I ever quit college?' The very first time I was interviewed it blew my mind. I failed miserably.... I'm the [typical] kind of guy and most people were at least my age and whatever heavy industry you come from. They ask you a question [in the] interview... and you're hands on. 'This is what I do' [holds up hands]. (Forest Worker 1)

Table 6.6. Conventional Characterization Frames: the forest worker

Positive and negative views of others relative to the problem and solutions?	● practically skilled; undereducated; dependent; options limited

An additional concern was that most skilled workers were leaving because they could find opportunity elsewhere. Many participants from industry, economic development and municipalities saw this as a challenge to reopening mills. This also created concern among community leaders who viewed many of these individuals as potential future community leaders and organizers who would do committee work and fundraising and help run the town and the mill. This loss of labour was considered part of the larger forestry crisis affecting both mills and towns that would have a lasting impact by further eroding northern talent:

Lost all the people... the tradesmen, the young people who were born and raised here. Like you know you have them for life here. Now they've had no choice [but] to go elsewhere and they're not coming back. You know you lose people with roots here, it hurts you even more. (Municipal 8)

I think the biggest challenge that the industry faces or that we're going to face is human resources. Our northern communities... it's going to be tough to restart a mill because the skill sets are not there... to allow them to operate. (Industry 4)

> Like right now to try to start up any of the mills would be... and I think locally the companies recognize it will be a problem. They *don't have* the labour force. (Province 1)

Many forest workers, residents and municipal officials support the main industries and look to the companies for opportunity and leadership. Interest-based identities indicate a common identity frame linked to industrial forest extraction and a lifestyle based on a common vocation. Local actors identify with previous generations of forest workers who have lived and recreated in the forest. The Minister of Northern Development, Mines, and Forestry, Michael Gravelle, mobilized this common identity frame as an appeal for public participation in the tenure reform discussions:

> Forestry is unique among industrial sectors, in that those who use the forest also play a critical role in its replenishment. Forest workers – and the communities who depend on the bounty of our forests – enjoy a dynamic and living relationship with this great natural resource. (OMNDMF 2009)

While the northern resource and mill town identity and characterisation frames seem inclusive and have remained stable over time, these social framings exclude different groups who do not share the view that commodities and large industry are the best way to produce wealth in the North. For example, value-added wood and non-timber forest products advocates would have difficulty finding themselves in this identity, which excludes their specialized interests. This identity also excludes others in the community who may not share the same values and views about logging and industrial extraction (i.e., environmentalists).

A key silence in the conventional discourse surrounding forest resource development is that of First Nations, as reflected in both the content analysis of news media and personal interviews (Table 6.7). While about 20 per cent of the population in the Northeast Superior Region is Aboriginal (as shown in Chapter 5), as a group they have not benefitted proportionately from forest resource development given their Aboriginal and treaty rights. One First Nation representative (4) stressed that while they were aware that the industry was struggling, the crisis and local closures had not been a problem for their reserve members:

> When [the company] shut down you know, there wasn't even a blip here eh... *nothing,* because there's nobody working there. We're not connected over there.

Another First Nation representative (3) pointed to their historic exclusion from the forest industry:

> Do you know how many [Aboriginal] people worked in the [local forest] over the last 20 years? *Maybe*... five. And the [non-Aboriginal] community 20 minutes away that has a mill, they have 300 people working there. Is there an injustice?

Table 6.7. Conventional Characterization Frames: First Nations

Positive and negative views of others relative to the problem and solutions?	● Unorganized; withdrawn; dependent; troubled

While First Nations were recognized as neighbours and "part of our community" (Municipal 9), both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants remarked that it was an ongoing challenge to reconcile differences and foster a functional group identity that respected the distinct status and culture of First Nations and future interests of resource-based towns. Mutual prejudices and lack of trust coloured characterisations of traditionally opposing groups:

> ...the whole system out there [thinks]... 'Fuck we're not going there, those fuckin' Indians are crazy. (First Nations 4)

Referring to working relations with an area forest company, another First Nations representative (1) stated:

> I got all the documentation and emails in my office that'll show you that we don't really love each other.

Different belief systems (First Nations 1) and consultation process and capacity issues (First Nations 3, NGO 1, Province/OMNR 4) were identified as contributing factors to lack of respect and trust.

From the conventional view, industry representatives recognized a legal obligation to consult with Aboriginal peoples, and accommodate fibre allocations, plus a responsibility to maintain a working rapport with certain First Nations located on or near company-managed forests. Industry and provincial representatives openly addressed the issue that industry-First Nations relationships "were in their infancy" (Industry 2), variable (Industry 7), and fragile

(Province/OMNR 4), and in some cases were not validated through direct First Nations participation (Industry 4). As discussed further below and in Chapter 7, the reframing of a common identity that included both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals depended on the maturation of relations beyond that of legal obligation to willing collaboration, and the building of mutual appreciations and understanding (Gray 2003, 1989). Efforts to improve First Nations involvement and rapport are often the work of individual band, industry and municipal representatives committed to developing relationships with one another, seeing potential benefits for their communities first, and the organizations they represent second. This indicates a willingness to foster a reframing of identities that move from entrenched interest-based and institutional identities to place-based identities.

Table 6.8. Summary of Conventional Framings of the Forestry Crisis

Definition of the problem	Poor markets; high production costs; lack of competitive environment in Northern Ontario created by unsupportive policy
Attribution of blame	Provincial government, external forces, anti-industry lobby
Action(s) to be taken	Industry and government need to be more efficient; supermills; cut red tape and bureaucracy; better market wood products to increase demand; tweak tenure system
Who should act	Government has been slow to react and unsupportive; industry to become more efficient with support from workers (and town, when called upon)
Identity - the 'forestry professional'	The forest experts; manager of the forest for the Crown; professionals; the tough decision maker; provider; good business people; tenant
Characterization - the forestry professional	Technically focused; authoritative; hard science; disciplinary
Common identity - resource mill towns	Resource dependent, extractive, industrial
Characterization - the forest worker	Practically skilled; undereducated; dependent; options limited
Characterization of First Nations	Unorganized; withdrawn; dependent; troubled

6.3.2. Reframing for Local Control

6.3.2.1. Local Control Diagnostic Frames

Referring back to the opening statements of *section 6.3.1.1*, the narrative presented by the non-industry individual (i.e., NGO 1) sets out key parts of the local control diagnostic framing of the so-called forestry crisis (Table 6.9). This framing emphasizes different entities and reconfigures relationships among them to construct a different and nuanced view of problem(s) and solution(s). For example, while local control sponsors acknowledged the economic challenges identified by the forest industry, the root of the problem is viewed to be the lack of local control that has been maintained through outdated top-down governance structures and processes (i.e., the tenure system and management planning processes), which alienate northern residents, governments and businesses from the public resources that northerners depend on as the base of their living and culture.

Table 6.9. Local Control Diagnostic Frames

How is the problem(s) defined?	• Insufficient local control; undiversified commodity export focus; collaborative regional governance and capacity in Northern Ontario constrained by unsupportive resource development policy; most benefits leave region
Who/what is primarily to blame?	• Large foreign corporations; provincial government; tenure system; external forces

Local actors, mainly towns and First Nations, feel they have been historically marginalized from the full benefits of forest development through limited participation in decision making and access to wood. Speaking to the need for increased local control, participants from smaller forestry businesses (Industry 1, 5, 6), municipalities and local economic development (9, 16), First Nations (1), and the province (5) expressed that current decisions regarding forest management and business did not reflect local and broader economic, social and ecological values and interests. To illustrate:

> I think one of the biggest problems really, why the forest industry is where it is, is that over time it evolved where the outcome of the forest industry has been driven by a very select few, larger companies and they've been able to influence some policy exchanges... [pauses silently and thinks for about 15 seconds]… I think that when the decisions are made in the boardrooms of Bay Street versus in a boardroom of a local community,

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where a facility is located, that's become a real problem.... Because, you know, the resources are local, the people are local, everything, you know... the assets in mind are local. When decisions get made on the assets, be it human assets or whatever, a thousand kilometres away in Bay Street and it's totally driven by somebody's expectations on returns... on their investment... it has a tremendous social and economic impact in regions that they have no interest really about. (Industry 5)

It is also ultimately the shareholders who make the decisions... they're not made for a year from now; they're made for this quarter, plain and simple. It's for the shareholder. It comes down to money... doesn't come down to what's best for the community or what's best for the forest. (Industry 1)

The thing with the bigger corporations is of course there's actually no control. There is nothing you can do. It comes from somewhere else. (Municipal 16)

Local control advocates felt that regional resource development policy and governance (i.e., the tenure system) remained geared to export markets and foreign corporations and governments, both out of region and international. Participants attributed this disparity to the tenure system. Corroborating the survey findings presented in Chapter 5, the tenure system was considered outdated and inflexible. The main concern was that the system restricts new entrants and the flow of fibre to new users and uses, which was seen as "the number one killer" (Municipal 10) hampering new businesses, innovation and secondary manufacturing, for example:

We've got a small log home producer... outside of [town] and we have a fella' out here on the hill for a retirement business making timbers. These guys have a hell of a time getting wood even though this mill... brings in wood that is too big for its own facility. (Industry 1)

So, I think [the existing tenure system] really put a damper on any kind of innovation that could occur. I think our forests are still valuable and I think there's an immense number of different kinds of products that could come out of them... but essentially we weren't looking at that because we were so dependent on mills. (NGO 3)

Critics of the conventional system point out that it was structured with a focus on the geographic heartland of southern Ontario and so resource benefits flow out of the northern hinterland to the South, while northern talent is eroded and/or not developed. In this view, it is difficult for communities to affect change and promote development for stability because they are simultaneously disempowered by and dependent upon a system that serves outside private and provincial interests, while recirculating minimal wealth, fibre and skills in Northern Ontario.

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6.3.2.2. Prognostic Frames

The local control movement embraces a bottom-up and decentralized approach to regional development based on principles such as: self-reliance rather than dependence; cooperation rather than competition; redistribution rather than the accrual of wealth; equity and diversity rather than efficiency; and inclusive and open decision making rather than central control. This social framing assumes that residents share a strong commitment to their communities and the North as a distinct region, based on place as well as interest-based identities. Central to the prognosis is that a forest governance system is needed which empowers local actors and opens up the industry to diversify products and markets, recirculate benefits and foster the development of northern social and physical infrastructure (Table 6.10). In turn, this would decrease dependence and burden on the provincial government, Southern Ontario, and foreign companies and markets. The model would require and facilitate development of regional governance institutions. Indeed, many of the later reports discussed above made recommendations for policy institutes and development funds to support this sort of innovation in the North, whether technological or social. Provincial and industry players, even internationally owned companies could still have an important role in resource development, without the instability of 'sudden', short-term or narrowly defined decisions coming from distant centres.

6.10. Local Control Prognostic Frame

What action(s) must/should be taken?	• tenure reform for devolution and decentralization; capacity building and enhancement; build value added
Who must/should be responsible to act?	• government must listen to the people and reform archaic and unfair system; local people must organize and create future opportunities

Those advocating for increased local control (e.g., First Nations 1; Industry 1, 5; Municipal 15; NGO 1,2,3,4) indicated that the prognosis was to dismantle the current tenure system and place greater decision making control over forest resources in the communities. As one NOSCP representative observed, "We're in so deep now that it's hard to re-imagine the system. But we need to re-imagine the system" (NGO 3). While there was variation in the different models and actors' roles that could be followed, the key feature was that local actors

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(residents, government or business) must be in positions to make meaningful decisions regarding local resources:

> We have people making resource decisions from a degree-based wealth generation perspective and they're so far removed from the grassroots where the impacts are being felt that they're out of touch with reality. So to correct that you need to put resource decision making closer to where the resource is, where the intrinsic benefits can be optimised, and the intrinsic disbenefits are fully appreciated, not marginalised or consider to be extraneous to the decision making model. (First Nation 1)

> I think the success of the forest industry, remains in the hands, really, of local... of communities and local government and that we have to go back to the grassroots of what the forest industry *was* about. (Industry 5)

> As long as the communities have some kind of stake in their own forest. I think that's what's key. Does it have to be a cooperative forest? Not necessarily. Does it have to be a community forest? No. But it has to be open, it has to be transparent and it has to leave room for a community to participate. (Municipal 15)

These participants believed that local control could overcome problems caused by the existing top-down, centralised approach to forest management and industry. It was implied that diverse forest values, community groups, and impacts would be represented in decision making because decision makers would have a shared attachment to place and sense of ownership and responsibility (e.g., "tenure over your land base and your resource supply" (Industry 1); and "stake in their own forest" (Municipal 15). Ideally, releasing the wood supply from conventional commodity-oriented industry players to include people who 'fully' value and understand local forests would lead to product diversification, development of value-added manufacturing and NTFPs, and maximization of the value extracted from each tree and the ecosystem—all for broad local benefit.

In contrast, industry representatives and supporters (e.g., Industry 2, 3, 7, 9; Province 5) defended the status quo that served their interests and implicitly shaped their perceptions. Local control was considered with the same doubt and negativity given to value-added and the bio-fibre initiatives. Local control perspectives were taken as oversimplified, naive and needless complications of the existing system, which basically already addressed local issues: "Ontario has the most robust, the most involved, most consultative forest management system I've ever

seen. It's like a quicksand of consultation" (Industry 3). The following quotes represent the

common perspective from conventional sponsors:

> The communities all seem to think that if they were controlling or driving the way land, timber, or resource were allocated they could do a lot better job of it. But I think it a lot more complicated than that. (Industry 2)

> We can't let the mayor and council of a small community do it. They don't understand the business. (Industry 9)

While imagining alternatives, pro-local sponsors were careful not to portray local control

as a universal and trouble-free solution (NGO 2, 3; Municipal 15; Industry 6). Despite optimism

that the forest industry and management could be re-imagined, they shared concerns about local

capacity that were central to the conventional counter argument. But a distinction was that they

were willing to consider local control on the premise that capacity *did need to be developed*, and

could be developed:

> So we see more local control, and not that that's *the* answer... panacea... because it doesn't always solve all the problems. But having more local involvement, and whether you're talking about mayors or municipalities, or the people generally who live and work in the area, including First Nations, I think First Nations involvement is absolutely essential.... And I try not to get into the box of saying 'well, all we need to do to fix this is to have local control of community forests'. (NGO 3)

> I think there needs to be a transition towards more local involvement. But at the same time they may not have the expertise, or self-confidence.... Some of them might not even have the time. You have to think... some of these mayors are part-time. They *should be* fulltime [emphasis added]. (Industry 7)

Comments from both local control and conventional sponsors raise questions about the

level of confidence in local leadership and administration and the current capacity of small towns

to manage forests. However, participants also had difficulty envisioning town-managed forests

because it did not fit under the current arrangement that they were long accustomed to—the

common experience was with large-scale industrial tenure. This point is supported by the survey

findings (Chapter 5) that found 10 of 11 provincial and municipal officials from the Northeast

Superior Region were unaware of any other model or form of tenure that could be useful in

Northern Ontario. This uncertainty could be attributed to a dominant social framing of how

forest management and development should occur, which, as shown above, has strong ties to

regional identities and culture. As a response to crisis, the willingness of pro-local advocates to try and reframe the problems and solutions indicates that double-loop learning processes are at work to 'learn the way out' of challenges presented by conventional and dominant thinking.

6.3.2.3. Identities and Characterisations: Local Control

As external control was central to the local control framing of the problem, deep resentment surfaced in characterisations of 'outside' decision makers and actors who influenced the region. Both industry and provincial government (Queen's Park; OMNR head office in Sault Ste. Marie) were seen as contributing to the crisis (Table 6.11). Local control sponsors, some of whom were former forest workers, blamed industry for creating their own crisis:

> I feel for the forest companies sometimes but [I] also look at it like they drove their own bus in the direction, so... (NGO 5, tourism)

> They didn't want to change, or they didn't see the necessity of changing. They're the creator of their own problem. (Municipal 8)

Table 6.11. Local Control: Characterization Frames of Large Forest Corporations

Positive and negative views of others relative to the problem and solutions?	• irresponsible; whiners; outsiders; profit seeking and short term; resistant to change

Commodity producers were described as 'whiners' (NGO 4, environment) and 'outdated' (Municipal 8, 15) due to their reluctance to reinvest in facilities, diversify products and markets, and overharvesting and overproduction due to greed. While one large industry representative insisted that dimensional lumber was a value-added product (Industry 3), a small industry representative felt that much more could be done: "What we have are so-called high recovery modern sawmills that are butchering our wood for the benefit of making chips. We use the expression 'shit through a goose'. That's what they are" (Industry 1).

There was also a key difference in how forest companies were described with respect to their role and the forestry crisis (Municipal 9; NGO 5, Tourism; Industry 1). Rather than characterizing 'the company' as warranting paternal reverence, local control sponsors emphasized the outside interests of private shareholders and decision makers and profit motivations as conflicting with community interests, for example: "...the companies won't always do what's in the best interest of the communities—in fact quite often they'll do the opposite because it's in their best interest to do the opposite" (Municipal 9). Various participants from small forestry businesses (Industry 1, 6), economic development and municipalities (Municipal 13, 14, 16) made the distinction between large foreign-owned companies and 'local' companies owned by families or private individuals. There has been a move towards consolidation, which has led to fewer mills held by fewer large companies. Smaller, northern-owned companies (e.g., Haavaldsrud, Niska North, Dubreuil Forest Products, former family-owned Chapleau mills) were described as 'community-minded', a social framing linked to the history of family-owned operations in Northern Ontario. Smaller, especially locally-owned, companies were described as 'different' in the sense that they were home grown and worker/family-centred as opposed to profit-centred, for example:

> I see a huge difference... personally I feel that Haavaldsrud would not do anything to harm our region or to hinder their business, right, they don't want to shut down anytime soon. They would do the best so that they would be able to operate for the future... but I feel that Haavaldsrud would look at being sustainable in the future whereas Domtar would want to make money now because they don't have their roots here... Domtar would say 'let's go in, make our money and then we'll go somewhere else when we're done'. (Municipal 16)

> The only thing that Buchanan would be guilty of is trying too hard not to close. He tried everything. He probably closed a year too late. Like he knew he had the responsibility of a one-mill town there and he was doing everything in his power... like his staff was running numbers... he knew he was losing so much a month. (Municipal 13)

While some municipal representatives criticized the provincial government and OMNR as being indifferent (Municipal 9) and delayed (Municipal 13) in responding to mill closures, others (First Nations 2, Province 5, NGO 4, environment, Municipal 7) criticised the slow response to unseat idle SFL holders, for example:

...I've been telling MNR decisions have to be made yesterday... they can't say 'liability this... let's check with our legal staff' because all these opportunities that are there right now, the opportunity will be gone by the time you guys decide what's going on. It's gonna go back to status quo and you ain't getting them [industry] when they're strong. (First Nations 2)

Some people attributed the perceived inaction of OMNR to a captured relationship with industry. However, several others saw that OMNR and the province were instead "bombarded with crisis after crisis" (Industry 5), "trying to cope" (NGO 4, environment) and that the turbulent conditions were "all new to them" (Federal 4) (Table 6.12). Despite these challenges, the provincial government was considered essential to realizing reforms, due to its authority.

Table 6.12 Local Control: Characterization Frames: Province and OMNR

Positive and negative views of others relative to the problem and solutions?	• Overwhelmed; muddling through; intimidated by industry and prospect of mill closures;

Showing an important reframing of local identity, local control sponsors acknowledged responsibility for creating change and opportunity and through local collaboration in decision making and resource sharing:

[the community level] that's where the new vision is actually going to come from because all the new possibilities come from reorganizing the people. (NGO 1)

To go back to where I see this town is going... with many young managers and business owners, we're working together. We're saying 'as long as you're in the bush pull this species'... we're sharing road costs. We're not competing with each other, we're helping each other... the only way you're goin' to a move forward in any community is if everybody works for everyone's benefit. (Industry 1)

...the bad times have probably, may have turned out to be... I call it a 'God send' for people to get focused on their communities and say 'what is it going to take to move forward here?' Because we can't just keep dying a slow death here, little by little.... And for the most part I guess we started to accept it and we probably shouldn't have. But we did and now we have to change. (Industry 5)

Community leaders from municipalities, business and First Nations, for example, mobilized place-based identity frames that promoted an empowered position and reframed

northern residents as resource 'owners', 'stewards' and 'capable' decision makers, rather than simply labour for the mills—a point of divergence from the conventional view. One First Nation representative (First Nations 1) suggested that a more inclusive approach was needed, based on the principles of cooperation and local control of resources. This individual believed this would enable 'northern people' to benefit from area forests rather than continue to fight over traditional resource rights and interests. In addition to resource dependency, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal local control sponsors justified their increased involvement on the basis that the northern resident workforce had helped to generate provincial wealth, and that they must live with the environmental and socio-economic outcomes associated with mill closures and resource development.

They also saw that capacity *did exist locally* and could be developed and enhanced—if it was *allowed to flourish* through tenure and policy reforms. Many people (Industry 6; Province 6, 7; Federal 3; Municipal 9) suggested this would require governments, forest workers, First Nations and residents, among others, collectively to change the way they thought about forest products and communities and the acceptable roles and responsibilities of public-private-civic actors, in order to recognize the full potential of northern residents and forests, for example:

> We're too dependent on the corporation. The leadership around here is always depending on a company to come from heaven and save us eh... create 300 or 400 hundred jobs. And I'm saying 'no' that's always led to the bust and boom cycle we've always gone through and it's time to change that. Locally owned, locally controlled. And I think we'd have more control over where we market... more flexible. (Industry 6)

> In the future it's going to be a combination of things, not just simply cutting the forest down. People are going to have to understand that. And a lot of people don't. They just look at the traditional model. (Municipal 9)

Local control sponsors perceived a need to move away from the boom and bust 'mindset' (Province 6) and 'culture' of commodity production (Province 7) associated with company-OMNR-worker interest-based identities and problem definitions, to a position where local capacity could be mobilized and fostered as part of alternative and transformative solutions. Rethinking the roles and relationships among forest actors implies a need to reframe local identities and the 'mill town' culture of forest dependence (Table 6.13).

Table 6.13. Summary of Local Control Framings of the Forestry Crisis

Definition of the problem	Insufficient local control; undiversified commodity export focus; collaborative regional governance and capacity in Northern Ontario constrained by unsupportive resource development policy; most benefits leave region
Attribution of blame	Large foreign corporations; provincial government; tenure system; external forces
Action(s) to be taken	Tenure reform for devolution and decentralization; capacity building and enhancement; build wood value added and NTFPs industries;
Who should act	Government must listen to the people and reform archaic and unfair system; local people must organize and create future opportunities
Characterization of Industry	Irresponsible; whiners; outsiders; profit seeking and short term; resistant to change
Characterization of OMNR/government	Overwhelmed; muddling through; intimidated by industry and prospect of mill closures

6.3.3. Powerful Actors: Forms and Sources of Power

Actors' perceptions of power relations are linked to common identity and characterisation frames as well as understandings of the main problems and solutions in the forestry crisis. Social framings of the crisis also represent to varying degrees the interests of dominant and marginalized actors. As such, interview participants were asked what individuals or organizations they thought had the most power over public forests in the Northeast Superior Region and why. The question was kept purposefully broad to assess how power relations were perceived with respect to peoples' experiences in forest management, planning and policy in the

Table 6.14. Dominant Actors: Agent-based Power Frames

Source	*Actor*
Authority/Position	Province/OMNR – landlord and *CFSA* Industry – licensed timber rights First Nations – Treaty and Aboriginal rights
Expertise	Industry – certified professionals in forest business/economics, science, engineering, biology, GIS
Resources	Industry – capital, equipment and personnel
Relational	Forestry Professionals – shared disciplinary training and association legislated to certify individuals in dominant and industry-supporting governance organizations

context of the ongoing crisis. Participants' social framings of the sources of power provide evidence of how agent-based and structural power was exercised in the problem domain (Table 6.14).

6.3.3.1. Authority/Position

Most people framed the provincial government and OMNR as the most powerful actor(s) based on 1) legislated authority and therefore decision making ability of the Province as owner of the resource for the people of Ontario, and 2) the OMNR as the assigned regulator. Senior industry and provincial representatives, along with one forestry consultant, distinguished between the province and levels in the OMNR hierarchy. For example, it was the "central arm of [provincial] government, not necessarily the Ministry of Natural Resources" (Province 5) that set the direction and made "the rules" (Industry 3). This framing was often emphasized by industry:

Researcher: Who has the most power over forests?

Industry 3:   The Ministry of Natural Resources, absolutely. Provincial government. It's their land, it's their forests. The Minister of Natural Resources has the *CSFA*... it's very clear the Ministry of Natural Resources is the body that ultimately grants all harvesting licenses and ultimately the Minister is the person that grants all forest processing mill licenses. So the Ministry of Natural Resources is the... from the forest sector's [perspective] the centre of power in North Superior.

Researcher: Some people think the industry has capture on the policy?

Industry 3:   Absolutely *not*. Come spend a week in my office. We react to the Minister.

As "landlord" of the forest, the province was seen as the one actor that "could make some change" (Industry 5) and remove "roadblocks" (Industry 6) towards solving the forestry crisis for all sides. While ultimate authority and decision making rested with the province, others suggested this was not totally unilateral. For example, one senior industry representative noted that while higher level policies could be changed, the provincial government must demonstrate positive outcomes, and not "just necessarily economic benefits, but it's social benefits, all those things..." (Industry 5). A senior OMNR representative supported this observation: "the political structure that we work under is very influential in terms of how public interest is received and morphed into decisions that are made" (Province 8). Both comments confirm the offsetting

power of other actors, namely industry, politicians and social groups, at work in decision making processes.

In terms of policy work, OMNR and industry representatives pointed to the Industry Relations Branch of the Forest Division of OMNR located in Sault Ste. Marie as the "centre of power" for the Northeast Superior Region (Industry 3) and the highest provincial presence to preside over forestry, for example:

> We have the Forest Division at Sault Ste. Marie, Bondar [Place], and definitely that's the nexus of forest policy influence to our region and to our District. (Province 2)

From a top-down decision making perspective, positional power held through the Industry Relations Branch, as the name implies, was "solely committed to maintaining positive relations with industry" as the major client (Province 8). One industry representative stated the importance of this connection: We do a lot [of lobbying] directly because we're in the Sault and are really connected with Bondar" (Industry 7).

Another industry representative pointed out how the province drove program policies (e.g., Lands for Life, Living Legacy, endangered species) and how, despite impacts on operating costs and wood supply, local industry and communities "do not have that same level of impact upon the decision making as the province, because they're the ones who manage it" (Industry 4). It was on this level that 'outside' environmental organizations were also framed by industry as having equal or more power to influence policy through relational and voice power:

> And you've got a few people down South influencing this stuff and that's where the population base is. So the fact is these northern communities out there listen to them. And yeah industry does a lot of talking with the government to try to get things changed. I think the environmental groups still have a lot of influence. (Industry 7)

Another industry representative shared this view but seemed surprised to learn that non-industry groups conversely saw the industry as the dominant player:

Industry 2:   The powers are the people who are vocal... the paid [environmental] lobbyists and the people lobbying the government that are directing the policy. And we as an industry tend to sit back more and be more passive about it.

Researcher: What I take from what you just said was that paid lobby groups are directing

policy more than the forest industry. And what I constantly hear from non-industry groups is that the forest industry solely directs forest policy along with the provincial government. So you can see I get contrasting views... and it's curious that each side sees the other... [as most powerful].

Industry 2: That's a very interesting perspective and I've never even really thought of it like that. I guess it depends what seat you're sitting in and that's how we feel. Yeah we have industry groups that try to direct policy... Ontario Lumber Manufacturing Association, Ontario Forest Industry Association.

Acknowledging the competition between industry and environmental lobby groups, an NGO representative stated that OMNR had a limited "stock list" that they consulted with from industry, environmental groups such as the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, recreationists, municipalities, and some First Nations (NGO 3). As discussed below, non-state actors were perceived to use various sources of power (relational, coercion) to access provincial authority.

Traditionally less involved actors, such as those linked to municipal and federal economic development (Federal 4; Municipal 12, 15), tourism (Municipal 11, NGO 5), forest workers (1), and NGOs (NGO 4, environment), described OMNR as the most powerful actor in general, based on decision making authority. However, these participants focussed on actions and directives emanating from district and regional offices. OMNR was recognized as landowner and therefore the agency with decision making authority regarding licences and wood (re)allocations, plan certification, and as the entity responsible for safeguarding the forest resource. Thus, OMNR's positional power, while linked 'upward' to strategic initiatives, was framed by these actors with respect to more day-to-day forest management decision making.

However, while OMNR was seen as the most powerful actor due to its position to grant forest tenure and decision making authority to SFL holders, this delegation led some (Federal 3; NGO 4, environment; NGO 5, tourism; Municipal 16) to perceive industry as equal or more powerful as a result, for example:

The current industry who has the access to timber... who then is really therefore in control of what's going on... they make the decisions... (Federal 3)

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From what I can see the forest management process is a very close marriage between the MNR in the holders of the forest units. In the White River forest the ones who have the control is what's dictated through licensing... it's Domtar and MNR.... So the marriage [is] between those two groups at the very core. Everything else around it is secondary to the actual forestry company. (NGO 5, tourism)

Given the daily experience of local residents as forest community officials, workers and recreationists, they perceived industry as having gained the most direct control on the land day-to-day, which is the sphere in which most people live and work. SFL holders were also perceived to have more power because they prepared plans that were reviewed and approved by OMNR: "They control how the plan is developed and how the information is presented.... MNR's secondary influential because they, you know, have the ability to say to industry 'do it different, do it better'" (NGO 4, environment). This same environmentalist and an industry representative (7) also noted that OMNR often consulted industry when tweaking operational policy, such as streamlining the forest management planning manual[13] and processes "to make things easier for industry" (Industry 7).

Non-industry actors framed industry in a position of dominance relative to other actors due to its legal authority to harvest wood, its responsibility for public timber, its central role in forest management planning processes and in advising on operational policy change. However, it could be argued that such activities were more publicly visible and so non-industry actors thought that industry had more power than it actually does. Indeed, one industry representative provided this alternate view:

The Ministry... [has] the ultimate authority. While industry writes all the forest management plans, to go right to the very front, the District Manager appoints the planning team with the plan author. It's his decision, he can say 'I don't want this plan author, get another one.' On the planning team there are always more MNR employees than there are industry employees. That's not to say they do more work because I think we do the lion's share. They review the plans so they have all the control. I can tell you how different my plan would look if we were writing it. Like ultimately when we're writing those plans with the Ministry we are agents of the Crown. (Industry 3)

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[13] The Forest Management Planning Manual "prescribes the requirements for Ontario's forest management planning system" regarding "renewal, harvest and maintenance and guides the actions of anyone operating in a Crown forest." Available: *http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Forests/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_164306.html*

In contrast, the advisory position of LCCs and other public forums was criticised as 'token' because these forums were not "set up for the average person" (Municipal 10) and they did not provide meaningful opportunities to participate in decisions that could affect "wholesale" change (NGO 1, community; Municipal 8, 14). Local control sponsors generally framed these forums and First Nations involvement mechanisms as ineffective and merely a form of placation.

Long treated as external to forest management planning and policy, First Nations, Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, and the court decisions upholding those rights, were identified in a supplementary fashion. First Nations (1, 3) and others (Municipal 15, Industry 7) held that the positional power of government and industry came with the historic marginalisation of First Nations, for example, "...government and industry can't rule with impunity anymore because the First Nations are waking up. They know their rights and the courts are starting to back the First Nations" (First Nations 1). First Nations were framed as rising to a position of future authority as their rights were increasingly upheld by court decisions and as much needed collaborative networks and capacity were developed.

6.3.3.2. Expertise

Participants identified expertise as another source of power. Industry followed by government were considered most powerful in this category, undoubtedly reinforced by their historic position/authority and the bureaucratic and disciplinary structures that have developed around forestry practice and industry in Ontario (see Chapters 2 and 3). The routine interaction of government and industry, and with the consulting firms that service both actors, involves trained professionals from forestry, engineering, business management and economics, biology and other technicians.

While improvements for public involvement have been made, public forests in Northern Ontario are managed by a technocracy in which forest professionals are 'the experts' on and in public forests. Through provincial government and industry, they have created a system that supports their interests while marginalizing the public, for example:

> I would say that unquestionably the industry is probably the single most influential. First of all, they are professionals who know. We are all citizen representatives, and I'm talking about participants on committees, or we're representatives of local government.

> That's not the environment of the world you work at it every day, right? I guess I can only go from my experience on Local Citizens Committee. It's a technical environment. When you get in there are a lot of acronyms. The management planning process evolves continuously in terms of new Ministry guidelines and policies and initiatives that come out. It's not static. So you're continuously being required to learn.... (Municipal 14)

Congruent with the forestry professional identity frame, one industry representative (1) and RPF stated SFL holders "hold a lot of strength and that comes from the fact that they hold a lot of expertise on what is possible what is doable". The ability to conduct business, plan and undertake forestry operations within the system required a range of expertise (and resources and relationships) that industry alone possessed.

The LCC environment was frequently brought up as a key forum for public involvement whose members were perceived to be well-informed. Still, given the technical operating environment of public workshops and committee meetings, "it's difficult even for the Local Citizens Committee to follow the conversation because of the way the information is presented to them. There's this huge volume of information..." (NGO 4, environment). Two different RPFs acknowledged this challenge. One observed that LCC members were underfunded and "not well trained so they don't understand a lot of the forest management issues" (Industry 6). The other ironically explained:

> Anybody who wants to be can be involved. Forest management planning is an open public thing. Part of the problem, though, is that the process is so complicated and so convoluted and policy driven and burdened that even the people that do it full time have a hard time understanding it. So that's part of what makes it difficult for people to become involved. It's way too complex for the 'average Joe' to understand and even when you are involved every day. (Industry 2)

Perceived power imbalances were attributed to both the nature and level of involvement (process design) and an information format that reinforced resource development interests and expertise by constraining non-expert input. Many local control supporters confirmed and contested this arrangement, such as this tourism representative and former LCC member: "certainly forest management comes back to forest companies. It is their business. I certainly agree that they gotta be there, but certainly all the other stakeholders have to be there" (NGO 5, tourism).

However, in order to 'be there', local forest actors were made to adopt managerial technical jargon and concepts in order to effectively represent and pursue their own interests. This in itself is an example of structural power at work as it reproduces the dominant social order (Raik et al 2008). One First Nations representative raised this issue with respect to OMNR requirements for Aboriginal consultation in forest management planning processes and cooperative SFL negotiations:

> I was really disappointed in the lack of direction when it came to how the First Nations was to be consulted and to what extent. The only key sentence I found in that forest management plan was that First Nations have the right to have enlightened consultation. If you look at that sentence 'enlightened consultation', what exactly does that mean? Does that mean that we're going to as long as they have a representative from the First Nations at that meeting... that they've done their job? And 'a representative'... what does that mean exactly? Is it a grade school student...? Is it a social worker...? Is it a member of council? (First Nations 3)

This imposition of the conventional industrial approach constrained First Nations groups that also had limited capacity:

First Nations 3: If you look at the configuration of the forest management plan... in the planning section alone there is maybe three people from MNR and 6 people from the company, the for-profit company, and there's one First Nations person.

Researcher: Seems like there is an imbalance there.

First Nations 3: *Definitely*. This is what I walked into. And on top of that I am sitting here as [a non-forester] right and they are all foresters. Now the only thing that I have going for me is that this company has to work with this First Nations and... Ministry of Natural Resources... so they should be servicing me as a First Nation. They have to help me build capacity to have capacity to work and to benefit in that forest in order to have some kind of benefits for this First Nations. So the first thing I asked for was a forester 'if you want me to have enlightened consultation.'

Another First Nations representative (2) with forestry training scrutinized industry and provincial motivations, and concluded they actually limit the development of public expertise to intentionally discourage stakeholder involvement in cooperative SFLs and exclude their participation in the discourse:

If industry was so keen on doing co-op forests, then why wouldn't they just take a month and send foresters from within the organization to go to the communities and have a two-hour or four-hour whatever thing just in layman terms saying 'this is why we do clear-cuts and jack pine stands' and say 'now you know'. They don't. They don't want to educate them. They just want to use excuses 'well [other stakeholders] don't really know what they're talking about. They can pay if they want to get involved.

Different sources of agent-based power were often linked where financial resources were needed to hire expertise that was internally absent. First Nations, municipal and industry representatives commented on the lack of experience and training and problems with rollover in economic development positions in general (Municipal 10, 12; First Nations 3; Industry 5). For example, many communities were remiss in efforts to diversify their local economy over past decades. Prior to the recent crisis, Hornepayne and Dubreuilville never had a municipal position dedicated to economic development, and while White River did have an economic development corporation "on paper", it had not been active for about ten years.

This limitation was due in part to overreliance on single employers, a focus on resource extraction, lack of resources and the associated mill town identity and culture of dependence that presumably eclipsed the perceived need and desire. Towns and reserves previously had no need for developing forestry expertise and capacity for participation due to their ongoing exclusion from the forest industry, other than providing service centres and labour. Moreover, while some communities were fortunate to have well-educated professionals returning to fill economic development and administrative positions, recently created positions in White River and Hornepayne were filled by interns funded by the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation on a contract basis rather than as fulltime municipal employees. Economic development positions in Manitouwadge and within the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines were also filled with high quality yet recent university graduates with limited work experience. One participant definitely felt outmatched:

I finished university... and got thrown into this job... as [the mill] was closing down. I guess it's when the economic development department was kind of established for the town. 'We're in crisis... [and] you are? What are you going to do to save us?' Know what I mean, you have all this pressure. (Municipal 12)

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Accepting the municipality's marginal position in forest resource development, one university trained municipal representative deferred to the 'experts':

> We have to trust the professionals that are the bureaucrats... that they ultimately have our best interests at heart. They're trained. They have masters and PhDs in forestry, PhDs in bioenergy. Yes it's great that the community needs to be involved in that but the community doesn't necessarily need to be in charge of that. (Municipal 10)

The situation was similar for First Nations. One representative pointed to the relationships between developing expertise and funding. Band funding was limited and none was "specifically geared to resource management or put under forestry or under mining" (First Nations 3). Band council and administrative positions were often vacant and could not be filled internally even if there was funding. Physical isolation combined with low pay (i.e., max $42,000/year) made it difficult to attract talent:

> What you're ending up with is the lowest end of economic development. Mostly employment training stuff. There are very few economic development officers who would work for that kind of money in a remote semi-remote location. So unless you grow your own, meaning that you have someone trained from within, and that will take 10 ...15 years to train, someone to get to the level that you need to be able to go to negotiate with the government, right. So that is a serious problem right now. That is one of the barriers for First Nations right now when it comes to managing the natural resources. (First Nations 3)

6.3.3.3. Resources and Threat

In addition to having personnel with specialized expertise, industry had the most investment capital to develop resources on a large scale and in remote, unserviced and thinly populated hinterland areas (Industry 6, NGO 5, tourism). In keeping with the conventional mill town identity framing, industry brought the capacity and infrastructure to these places in the first place, whether roads, hydroelectric generation, or skilled people: "I mean especially in Northern Ontario with these large tracts of land. They're the only ones who have the pockets deep enough that they can make investments like that" (Industry 6). Participants commented on the conventional arrangement among the industry, province, and towns. This was seen to create a situation ripe for coercion due to the ever-present promise of investment, campaign funding, and the subtle threat that a company could withdraw, for example:

When you deal with forest companies there's only four or five and you're dealing with [a] large numbers of employees. They've been the stakeholder that we feel—that everybody feels—has influence because of the employment and the worth of these businesses (NGO 5, tourism)

Big forestry and mining companies were perceived to be "driving the economy" (Municipal 11) and many at the same time contributing to political campaigns. Many non-industry actors (Federal 3; First Nations 2, 4; Municipal 10) were suspicious of this arrangement and felt it gave industry political leverage. However, a senior OMNR representative framed the relationship as supportive rather than coercive:

No doubt that goes without saying that those people who have had a business relationship with government in the past and have made significant investment, government isn't about to shut those people down ...you know we haven't announced that we're buying out licenses or cancelling forest licenses in Ontario, which is one of the underpinnings of the forest economy. So anyone who does have a significant investment that supports the government's objectives for healthy sustainable communities is going to... the government's going to address their interests. And... they put a huge effort to try to assist the current industry with restructuring and its competitiveness $700 million or more was put in. The forest sector competitiveness Secretariat has developed a whole strategy to help industry be more competitive. (Province 8)

Some non-industry participants resented what they saw as coercion and had difficulty accepting the industry aid packages. A tourism representative (NGO 5) framed this action as "throwing money away" and a "crime", while an environmental representative (NGO 4) thought it was ironic that forest resource inventories and road maintenance had been taken back by the province "but industry kept all the rights".

6.3.3.4. Relational and Structural Power

Relational or coalitional power derives from membership in and/or affiliation with a group of people who share and support a common view (Gray 2003). Relational power is associated with common identity as linkages are fostered by drawing on shared interests or values (Putnum and Wondolleck 2003). As described above, there is a perceived closeness and mutually supportive relationship between the forest industry and OMNR/province (although contested by many in industry and the government), based on client service, provincial revenue generation, and a shared identity among forestry professionals who work in all aspects of the forest sector. One

forester from an NGO observed "There's always been that quiet relationship between the government and forest industry" (NGO 3).

Moreover, there is a perception that such professional affiliations and interactions bond government and industry actors in what has historically been a closed forest policy network. Relational power has the significant effect of concentrating other sources of agent-based power, namely positional, expertise, and resources, held by these dominant actors. This creates a sort of forestry 'iron triangle' (Hessing et al 2005) or mutually supportive environment based on the shared economic and disciplinary interests of policy makers in the provincial government and the forest division, regional and district level MNR bureaucrats, and industry-employed forestry professionals and consultants.

Professionals with lengthy experience in forest management provided interpretations of agent-based relational power:

> In my experience that's very much the model that industry... that foresters... which I would suggest have designed the current model that we are aiming... it's designed by foresters, for foresters, for the forest industry, and it has been adopted and recognized and accepted by Ontario at large.... They are the biggest visible group that have an influential role I would suggest.... When you look at what is the strongest industry in Northern Ontario, or what has been traditionally, you can see the linkage there. (Province 8)

> I do remember when I was involved more heavily [involved in wood allocation negotiations] that all of a sudden a bunch of MNR management ended up in the private sector. Certainly within a year of the decisions being made about where plants were going to be built, all of a sudden people started showing up... you're back and talk to people who are from the industry. It's a real tight fraternity right. There is only a couple forester schools in Ontario. In fact there are only a few in Canada, so the network is there sort of outside of the local networks that people would see. So there is a mix that's taking place there that is not readily apparent and it's tough to participate in.... The real power brokers are the industry and of course their network within. I see mill managers leave and slide into regional jobs at the MNR and I see, in the particular case I am thinking of, regional managers leave and slide into senior woodlands positions and I am thinking how does that happen? It's obvious that there were some real tight relationships there. There's no head hunting taking place. There was probably a beer at the OLMA [Ontario Lumber Manufacturers Association] (Municipal 14)

> The relational power of forestry professionals is supported by common training as well as legislation that provides authority through a professional association that "is responsible for the

regulation of the practice of professional forestry in Ontario and to govern members in accordance with the Ontario Professional Foresters Act 2000" (OPFA 2010). Acceptable practices and norms have been defined within the prevailing model of industrial forestry that embraces forest science and economic models, which in turn validate what they are practicing as necessary and the 'best' way to manage industrial forests. Claims that forestry professionals and science are somehow insulated from or immune to power relations and political interests are dubious because of this network and shared allegiance to core beliefs, values and interests.

It is at this confluence of agent-based power that structural power is also more visible. Entrenched social structure enables and constrains actions and thoughts of the members who in turn can choose to either change or reinforce dominant social framings (Raik et al 2008). Structural power holds that actors gaining power from social positions act to preserve the status quo and reproduce dominant social structures that serve certain interests above others. For example, to gain the benefits of entry and maintain their interests in the social hierarchy, aspiring professionals attend forestry, business and resource management schools where they learn to frame societal problems and solutions in a manner according to their discipline. As part of the technocracy developed to enable forestry professionals to conserve forests and serve the public good, forestry professionals behave and think according to shared norms and use a technical or "secret language" (Magill 1991) in ways that validate their discipline and preserve the vested interests of the forestry fraternity (Beckley 1998). In doing so, they marginalize other worldviews and interests, often unintentionally. When asked why the industry and government would not change despite the failure of the forest economy, one participant with a long history of involvement in consultation processes observed this power at work:

> I guess it comes back to the people in the MNR. Most of them have a forest background. Most of them have worked with the forest management plans and done it all their life. So I guess they have the power to control them [but] they've been brought up in that environment. Now they don't want to go back and say I've made... my life has been mistakes since day one. They say 'things are going fine'. (NGO 5, tourism)

In other examples, an environmentalist and one First Nation representative discussed how their initial involvement in forest management planning and negotiations was constrained by the

conventional industry discourse as well as how they had acted to try to make improvements through dissent:

> I don't think my views have changed but I think I've learned a lot more words to be able to express those views in a way that I can stay in a conversation longer. I just think that when you're newer to the conversation and if your priorities are ecological, house and community sustainability... industry and MNR can run a pretty rapid circle around you... around ecological sustainability because there are a lot of terms that can be used in a way that are very confusing and it takes a while to learn the language. Fifteen years ago I would've gotten frustrated when someone would say, 'we don't do clear-cutting here, we do multiple species harvest.' But I wouldn't have a rapid response. And I knew I was being run around but I didn't have the language to dismantle it and now I have the language to dismantle it. (NGO 4, environment)

> So the forest management plan... when I first went there it was 'alright, so this is the Bible that you go by? So how do you change this? Who does this forest management plan?' I met with the [MNR] forest management team but 'there's no process that I know of [to change things for First Nations']. Just because something is the way it is for 100 years, it's been exactly no matter what... 'that's how we do it'. I don't really give a damn. I'm telling you this doesn't work. This is a rigged... [system]. (First Nations 3)

The above outlined mutually supporting interests have shaped and controlled governance arrangements, although LCCs and First Nations opportunities introduced during the 1990s were a step forward. Yet these forums continue to be subject to power relations that favour forestry professionals in that they are quite technical, time-constrained, under-funded and therefore unsupportive of the lay people and First Nations they are to include. Rather than enabling lay participants to help transform the existing power structure to engage marginalized actors, participation processes are structured for and directed by professionals who generally share a disciplinary experience in forestry and managerial function, as well as the legislated authority and resources to manage. They are also part of a larger forest management system that, as shown above, many see as oriented to an increasingly corporatized, commodity-based industry rather than to northern development.

Participants framed less powerful actors as disorganized and divided in situations of low relational power. For example, First Nations were recognized by some (Industry 7, First Nations 1) to be diverse with weak or ephemeral bonds between communities:

But the problem with First Nations is they're too disorganized. You got one community that's pro-logging. 20 km down the road the next First Nations thinks logging is nothing but a detrimental chaos atom bomb that hit the Earth. So when you meet with them all, well they're all over the board, right. This chief's saying 'we should do this, we should do that', this chief's saying 'I wanted to do that...' If they'd joined forces, they would be at a powerful entity, big time. (First Nations 2)

The unorganized public was the other and most prominent group in this category (NGO 4, 5, Municipal 10, 11; Federal 3; Province/OMNR 4, Forest Worker 1). Participants described a variety of individuals perceived to have little time, money and/or incentive to become involved, such as the "local passive person" (NGO 5), the "private citizen" (Municipal 11), the "townies in the bush" (Federal 3) and loosely affiliated forest users who were "just a bunch of folks" (Municipal 8). For some, this included non-forest users and even non-residents (NGO 4, 5). Others recognized that one way for local residents to gain power was to organize, for example:

One of the things with representation is you have to be tied to something, you have to have a vested interest, you can't just represent your own interests if you're bait fishermen, you're representing your own interests but also representing other people doing the same thing. Sometimes you have to take the middle road here because [there are] people here who [think] differently that I represent.... When you're held accountable to an organization it certainly helps your credibility and representation. (NGO 5, tourism)

The guy on the street. The guy who got the boot from the mill that shut down... individually, yeah, he has no influence... You know it's the old thing, if we all got together.... (Forest Worker 1)

One OMNR representative noted this challenge is their community: "The local population here is not very well organized and structured to speak coherently... they speak as individuals when they want to address something related to forestry. First Nations are a *little* better organized" (Province/OMNR 4). Some also acknowledged that children, women, elderly residents and families had been affected by the crisis but that these groups were basically invisible (NGO 3, 4, 5; Municipal 9). Unorganized people without relational power were disadvantaged in forestry processes partly because lobbying was so important to influencing change, which in itself indicates the inadequacy of public and local involvement processes and disparate power relations in the community.

6.3.3.5. Voice/Forum

An added benefit of affiliation is that it can provide a collective voice that can be heard if an appropriate forum exists. One individual (Municipal 13) noted the absence of a crisis-specific public forum in their town early on and felt that this limited the voice of local people to express their concerns and ideas for solutions. Others pointed to the establishment of labour and community adjustment committees as important forums (Municipal 12, Forest Worker 4) but these did not (or were not intended to) provide a medium for local-provincial stakeholder consultation on the forestry crisis. Despite the existence of the industry relations branch in the OMNR and two industry lobby groups (OLMA, OFIA), some felt industry also lacked a similar forum and that they did not "have the ear of government" (Province 5, Industry 2). Tourism representatives too felt that they were not being heard and that the Ministry of Tourism was a "joke" and did not "want to deal with our issues" (NGO 5, tourism). Some believed LCCs provided the "proper channels" (Industry 9) and "huge opportunities for people to stand up and have their views heard" (Province 7) on forest management planning. However, these venues were not intended for the kind of involvement being demanded locally.

As discussed above, municipal leaders and labour groups in the Northeast Superior Region called on the provincial government to establish inclusive public hearings to assess the nature of the forestry crisis, neither of which happened. At the same time, several grassroots organizations emerged to provide discussion forums. Analysis indicates that between 2003 and June 2009 there was a perceived need and explicit desire among municipal and First Nations leaders, local enterprise, among others, for a regional collaborative forum on the forestry crisis in the Northeast Superior Region to bridge diverse actors with the provincial government. This finding confirms the observation of Hamersley Chambers and Beckley (2003) that Canadians are disenfranchised with respect to forest governance matters, which as shown here directly affect their communities. No multi-sectoral, region-wide forums were formed; however, the provincial government did later hold public consultation sessions across the north (announced in fall 2009) with the aim of reforming the Crown forest tenure system. The effectiveness of these sessions in terms of public participation, implementation of public input into forest policy, and the outcomes of new policies are topics for future research.

6.4. Discussion and Summary

The different frames reflected in the above analysis illustrate a conflict over meaning involving different actors striving to make sense of industry and community collapse. The 'forestry crisis' is contested among various actors with different values and interests that shape how they interpret the problem domain and how they believe the situation *should be* resolved. The frame analysis shows how power relations can impinge on local and non-local actors and how individuals and organizations construct and adopt social framings that align them with certain interests.

The analysis shows that the 'forestry crisis' was initially constructed by the industry and its lobbyists and government officials through the problematization of a set of conditions adversely affecting industry in its current form. This articulated what became a "master narrative" (Escobar and Paulson 2005: 257) of the crisis that advanced certain solutions and identities prevalent among actors with similar interests (i.e., companies, workers and municipalities). As the industry began to decline, most groups (industry, municipal, unions, academics, media) blamed the provincial and to a lesser extent federal government for contributing to the ensuing crisis. This blame was persistent and, as the contextual conditions changed, problems and solutions also changed while the provincial government response lagged.

As the conflict developed, industry representatives (e.g., Tembec, Dubreuil, OFIA) mobilized interest-based and later place-based identity frames in efforts to unite workers and towns with the industry's views; however, conventional solution frames remained industry-focussed (i.e., getting financial aid). The industry response was to try and balance inputs of production and cut costs, which meant lost jobs, whether through gained 'efficiencies' on the shop floor or layoffs. As the industry declined and shared interest weakened with idled mills, labour groups shifted to local identity frames. This reframing points to an important identity shift based on place and local values rather than industry interests and organizations. At the same time, local control groups (e.g., NOSCP, STRONG) mobilized strong negative characterisation frames of 'outside' companies 'exploiting northern resources'. They also appealed to 'northerners' to be self-reliant and protect 'their resources'—the anchor of their communities and 'way of life' in the past and future (i.e., common identity).

As the industry weakened, it became clear to all stakeholders that the forestry professionals, namely industry leaders and government, could not handle the crisis by themselves. This created room for emerging groups which framed the problem more broadly so that it was no longer solely the domain of government, industry and industry's lobbyists. While some in industry referred to the forestry crisis as a 'simple' problem that amounted to addressing 'factors' that challenged profitability, the failure to find an equally simple economic solution suggests the problem was and remains far more complex. This also points to an important contradiction in the dominant problem framing; acknowledging this complexity early on would have pressured industry to entertain the framings of a wider range of actors in the region and possibly collaborate with traditionally marginalized actors (e.g., First Nations, towns and NGOs).

There was a rapid response at the community level. But without active economic development competency in place, the less diverse, smaller and most dependent towns (i.e., White River, Hornepayne, Dubreuilville) were hit hard. Indeed, interviews showed that municipal leaders and residents believed their towns would close without an operational mill. Moreover, several other small forestry businesses were lost, which exacerbated the problem (e.g., ForestCare, Norwa, Pineal Lake Lumber). That the Chapleau mayor and council were 'shocked' every time job cuts were announced suggests that there was poor communication between the town and its major employer. This remains a challenge in many Northeast Superior towns (as discussed in Chapter 7). There was also desperation and competitiveness surrounding wood supply and potential business opportunities, among not only industry but municipal leaders and even provincial parliament members. This suggests division in the region that elevated the mill town identity above the so-called 'northern' identity. All mills, except for Chapleau's Tembec 'super mill', eventually were closed.

Social framings were broadened and reconstructed as new and dissenting voices entered the debate. Local control groups became increasingly vocal and emphasized the perceived need for tenure reform. But aspects of the conventional discourse were remarkably stable and pervasive, as evinced by local control actors who used conventional 'speak' in efforts to articulate alternatives. For example, referring to the forest as 'fibre' frames conventional uses, while excluding 'new' opportunities (e.g., carbon credits, NTFPs). It took several years for local

groups to reframe the problem(s) in a way that shifted attention away from purely economic or business factors to social and community development concerns, namely, local decision making control. There was also increasing emphasis on the need to diversify products and operations, focus on local development opportunities, create more inclusive collaborative decision making processes and locally-owned industries rather than ones driven by external companies and supported by the federal and provincial governments.

Although pro-local advocates tried to represent a range of interests from across the provincial North, some residents and municipal representatives remained supportive of the existing industrial model. Some forest workers hoped for the return of the status quo because it was familiar and closely tied to local culture. Many also positively framed the family or smaller privately owned mills and trusted them more than shareholder-controlled corporations with head offices in Montreal, Vancouver and Washington. Industry's initial rejection of non-traditional alternatives (e.g., bioenergy) also caused some to frame industry as archaic, rigid and 'whiners'. The ongoing dissatisfaction among all groups with government aid packages and sweeping closures forced tenure reform on to the agenda.

Interviews illustrated that it was difficult to re-imagine the forest industry and to reframe community identity as more than "hewers of wood" because the existing culture of work and life was closely tied to company control and resource extraction. As triangulated by the survey findings, numerous participants framed the solution as local control but would/could not provide details about how that might look or be implemented. As the crisis unfolded, the major drive and vision for the local control perspective was developed by local groups who wanted wholesale change (e.g., NOSCP, STRONG and NSFC). By April 2010, the provincial government had not unveiled its new forest tenure system. However, local human-forest relations will both shape and be shaped by the restructuring of public forest control. Reconciling old and new identities would involve a significant reframing of the 'mill town' and the nature of local forest dependence.

Meaningful change to the tenure system would alter the concentration of power in professional forestry organizations and structures because the current tenure system reproduces disparate power relations among industry, towns and First Nations. Such change, if it occurs,

would owe much to the apparently 'small' actions of local actors to contest the dominant conventional social framings by advocating new roles and responsibilities for local actors, new governance structures, benefit streams and forest uses. Alternative forums provided by local emerging collaborations were significant as local stakeholders never previously had a platform to facilitate broad discussion in order to address the crisis specifically. As discussed in the next chapter, the Mayors' Group and Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation were developed to address this gap and provide an appropriate forum.

CHAPTER 7 – SOCIAL FRAMINGS, POWER RELATIONS AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE NORTHEAST SUPERIOR FOREST COMMUNITY CORPORATION (NSFC)

7.1. Overview

> Organizations devote considerable energy to developing collective understandings of history. These interpretations of experience depend on the frames within which events are comprehended (Daft & Weick 1984). They are translated into, and developed through, story lines that come to be broadly, but not universally, shared (Clark 1972, Martin et a1 1985). This structure of meaning is normally suppressed as a conscious concern, but learning occurs within it. As a result, some of the more powerful phenomena in organizational change surround the transformation of givens, the redefinition of events, alternatives, and concepts through consciousness raising, culture building, double-loop learning, or paradigm shifts (Argyris & Schön 1978, Brown 1978, Beyer 1981). (Levitt and March 1988: 324)

As synthesized above by Levitt and March (1988: 324), analyzing how and why social framings evolve within social organizations is one key to understanding organizational change. Social learning and framing theorists suggest that groups of people continually reconstruct social framings by interpreting and reflecting on experience, which develops common meanings and assists people to reproduce common stories consistent with organizational values and objectives. The reframing of identities, problems, and solutions based on reassessment of changing organizational values and objectives indicates a double-loop or conceptual learning (see Chapter 3) mode necessary to actually shift the course of organizational actions. This contrasts with single-loop or instrumental learning in which repetitive actions are simply 'repaired' to produce desired outcomes. However, story lines do not always become universal due in part to conflict among people with different beliefs, interests, values and opportunities. From a critical perspective, then, understanding the social framings that guide decisions, actions and outcomes requires attention to power relations (Forsyth 2003; Armitage et al 2008).

In this chapter, I present an analysis of different social framings and forms and sources of power at work among the different actors within the NSFC. The NSFC is examined as an embedded unit of analysis within the broader forest policy community linked to the crisis domain (Gray 1989). Shifting views and power relations are linked to different actors' actions that have shaped the development of NSFC, originally intended as an alternative and part of the response to the forestry crisis. However, the analysis shows that power relations in the NSFC work to

assert conventionally dominant social framings that challenge reframing efforts fundamental to socio-political change in forest communities and collaboration with First Nations. The next section outlines the emergence of the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation and Northeast Superior Regional Chiefs Forum as part of the local search for solutions to the forestry crisis and forest governance reform.

7.2. From Vernacular Region to Collaborative Governance Forum: Emergence of the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation

The emergence of the NSFC and analysis of dominant social framings among actors can be divided into five overlapping phases:

1) the antecedent North Eastern Superior Mayors' Group (NESMG);
2) external consultancy;
3) Forest Communities Program (FCP) and proposal development and site designation;
4) NSFC operations;
5) engaging with First Nations.

7.2.1. Formation of the North Eastern Superior Mayors' Group (NESMG)

The NESMG was initiated in February 2000 when the mayors and other municipal representatives from Chapleau, Hornpayne, White River and Wawa began collaborating to develop alternative solutions to perceived common problems. Manitouwadge and Dubreuilville were invited to join shortly thereafter. An early participant remembered a growing recognition that the towns needed to work together: "we weren't in a crisis at the time, but we had some sense of what was coming" (NSFC 14). Proximity, demographic and economic characteristics were the main factors behind the group's selection process (NSFC 8). For example, nearby forest towns such as Marathon to the west and Hearst to the north were considered different, given their larger populations (2001 pop. 4416 and 5525, respectively) and economies. Municipal representatives also felt that the shared linkages were strongest among the six towns and residents.

As an informal network, the six towns had links to local government organizations and resources (e.g., personnel, staff) that could be mobilized. Links were later developed with selected advisors and consultants from sectors across Northern Ontario (e.g., academics, business

people and consultants) who were engaged at various times to share different perspectives (discussed below). Known locally as 'the Mayors' Group', this voluntary mayoral association contributed to coordinated decision making and also developed collective strategies for dealing with provincial and federal government officials. Collaboration bolstered the collective voice and capacity of the communities that were "essentially postage stamps in the middle of a vast unorganized territory" administered by the Province of Ontario (Albert et al 2006:7).

The group provided a forum to develop mutual understanding of common issues affecting Northeast Superior towns and of each other "at a time when there was certain animosity between the towns" (NSFC 14). Participants (e.g., NSFC 7, 11, 13; Industry 10) described a self-serving competitiveness among forest towns that coloured relations previous to such collaboration. However, ongoing interaction soon enabled recognition of their interdependence and common challenges, and an increasing willingness to work together:

> ...the reality is, no one community can do it on their own (NSFC 6)

> In the beginning we were very supportive of our *own* communities and did things in a private way. That's not the way we work anymore. If we're to survive [we have] to do it as a region. (NSFC 7)

> We lean on one to another... I guess that's why this here mayor's group was formed as those communities were so close knit and dependent on one another. So if we see an opportunity we're gonna support it whether it's going to Hornepayne or to Wawa... it will benefit us all. (NSFC 9)

Eventually, this association provided other benefits in the form of resource sharing and political prominence. The Group also fostered a regional place and interest-based identity. Many in the group openly stated they still had their differences (NSFC 6, 7, 9); however, loyalty to their region had contributed to a certain unconditional spirit of mutual support for individual pursuits, even where collaboration on certain projects was unwarranted.

Recognizing common service challenges associated with rural transition, the group set out to undertake projects considered necessary to maintain and improve services and infrastructure to retain and attract residents and businesses as well as develop the regional economy. Through links with formal governance bodies both below and above them,

achievements were realized to extend local cell phone service, maintain air service and local airports, attract healthcare professionals, and establish broadband coverage throughout the region (Albert et al 2006: 4). The initial focus was on realigning and improving services within the region to support development. As noted in Chapter 6, the group was also advocating as early as 2003 for increased provincial support for forest communities affected by the emerging crisis.

7.2.2. External Consultancy

7.2.2.1. Institute for Northern Ontario Research and Development (INORD)

Two separate sets of paid consultants with expertise in economics and forest products were instrumental very early and contributed ideas and energy to the eventual formation and direction of the NSFC. Each was first associated with different NESMG projects and gained initial entry through Wawa and Chapleau. By 2005, common challenges associated with Northern Ontario's forestry crisis motivated the Mayors' Group to experiment with developing a shared economic strategy based on the ideas of consultants from the Institute for Northern Ontario Research and Development (INORD) at Laurentian University, Sudbury.

Participants stated that the link to INORD came about through an earlier meeting between a representative of Wawa and a northern business leader at a regional municipal conference (NSFC 5, 7, 11). Acknowledging the existing and future role for forests in their communities, the Mayors' Group set out with guidance from INORD to "make the forest resources of the region work for the people who live in the six communities" (Albert et al 2006, 3). Central to this direction was the need for a greater level of local control and benefits from local forests than in the past. In developing and adopting a regional economic development strategy, coordinating decision making, and sharing project revenues, the six communities were increasing structures and processes for integrated problem solving and developing an unofficial regional governance forum. Through meetings and consultant advice, the six communities were also developing an alternative vision of the potential relationship between forest resources and communities within *their region*—one that refocused on non-conventional and value-added forest products and that departed from industry control of local public forests.

7.2.2.2. Chapleau Economic Development Corporation (CRDC)

A second group of consultants (i.e., Biotrends and Forest Bioproducts Inc., Sault Ste. Marie; Planned Approach, Sudbury) had been actively working on innovative NTFP and forest value-added projects under the leadership of the consultant EDO with the Chapleau Regional Development Corporation (CRDC). CRDC was an arm's length economic development organization co-founded and chaired by a Chapleau town councillor and prominent local business person. Although CRDC was not under the township organization, its core operations were funded by the municipality (NSFC 3). CRDC also leveraged significant funding from different government programs.

One participant described the group as working to promote business opportunities through a network of forest industry investors and entrepreneurs and their respective political and business links (Local Enterprise 1). For example, CRDC had developed a volunteer network of members and support staff from the local offices of the Township of Chapleau, Tembec, OMNR, MNDM, FedNor and local forestry jobbers and tourism, among others ('Chapleau's Economic Plans Unveiled', *Chapleau Express*, May 2005). Chapleau municipal and business representatives described the CRDC as motivated and dedicated to collaboration in Chapleau for community benefit (Local Enterprise 1, Municipal 14; Industry 9). Although pursuing their main objective to promote local economic opportunities, a limitation was that CRDC was not regionally focussed and was not formally working with area First Nations (NSFC 3). Among the NTFP projects being researched, plans for a small-scale blueberry plantation were well underway in Chapleau (as were separate plans for a plantation in Wawa) prior to NRCAN's FCP funding announcement.

Various interrelated events and conflicts began unfolding between the summer of 2006 and the time the NSFC became operational. Described as reactionary and attributed to constraints imposed by time limitations and FCP program requirements (NSFC 3), these conflicts nonetheless led to the eventual downgrading of relationships with consultants and, ultimately, a shift in leadership and ideas that led to the creation and direction of the NSFC.

7.2.3 Forest Communities Program Announcement and Proposal Development

Natural Resources Canada released a call for proposals for the FCP during the summer of 2006. A main goal of the program was to "encourage the development of knowledge, information tools and best practices to help forest communities meet the challenges of transition in the forest sector" (NRCAN 2007). The intention of the FCP was to also "foster collaborative community efforts to help communities take advantage of new economic opportunities from forest resources" (NRCAN 2007). This 'refocusing' on forest-based communities and knowledge development sought to increase local involvement in and benefits from sustainable forest management through providing funding and networking opportunities for new or existing community level organizations, which integrated public/private/civic perspectives towards building more sustainable forest communities. Successful sites would receive up to $400,000 in federal funding annually for five years to establish research and programs aimed at generating economic opportunities, human capital, and knowledge on how to do sustainable forest management. NRCAN expected matching funding would come from other sources.

Subsequently, when the funding opportunity was raised at a Mayors' Group meeting, Chapleau representatives indicated that they were already working on an application based on CRDC's ongoing NTFP work. Participants and consultants (NSFC 3, 5, 6, 7, 11; Local Enterprise 1) from Chapleau and Wawa had different recollections about who inspired a joint application under the Mayors' Group on behalf of Northeast Superior Region; however, there was general agreement that a regional scope and integration of ideas from both sets of consultants would provide a stronger proposal. However, CRDC was not directly involved with the Mayors' Group previously and participants stated immediate dissonance arose between the two groups who had been working separately for the municipalities until that point (NSFC 3; Local Enterprise 1, 2).

Both groups of consultants essentially negotiated with each other in drafting the proposal on behalf of the Mayors' Group, and each worked to advance their own project ideas. Many participants observed this competition, as represented in the following comment:

> ...these consultants all have vested interests. Presumably in writing a proposal they
> undoubtedly wrote it from the perspective of potential business opportunities for

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themselves and, you know, there's always that risk. At least if you're a consultant writing a proposal. (NSFC 13)

The language and structure of projects and funding in the initial proposal clearly indicate attempts by consultants to meld ideas while retaining control (see Albert et al 2006). In particular, the first major component was framed according to the technical focus of CRDC's ongoing alternative forest product development and local projects. A technical committee consisting of CRDC consultants and others would advise a newly formed NTFP corporation to be located in Chapleau (Albert et al 2006: 17), which would eventually double as the head office for the site. Affiliated consultant companies and their projects provided the core of this part of the proposal. The independent role of CRDC (and its hired consultants) in forming the NTFP corporation, and access to future FCP funding, were stated to have Mayors' Group approval:

> Building on its work over the last three years, Chapleau recommended an approach to the Superior East Mayor's group that was accepted. Chapleau is therefore taking the lead on the NTFP segment of the application. The Chapleau Regional Development Corporation will create the NTFP Corporation and the Town of Chapleau will be responsible for the administration of the funds until such time as the newly incorporated body is formed and will transfer funds and responsibilities to the new corporation when it is ready to assume its duties. (Albert et al 2006: 17)

The second component of the proposal was clearly an extension of ideas emanating from INORD—high level strategic policy development and projects supporting the redesign of forest tenure and education aimed at capacity building and cultural change. Associated projects would be directed by a Strategic Council that would act as the "brains trust" and economic planning arm of the NSFC (Albert et al 2006: 28). The opening page of the proposal was loaded with political overtones, stating that the proposed NSFC would work to shift the control of Crown forests to communities (as opposed to private forest corporations) as *the* crucial step in successfully developing value-added and non-timber forest product opportunities:

> The strategy involves careful steps to develop a population capable of adding value to the forest resources both before and after harvest, development of new training institutions, and expansion of a development corporation specifically to promote non-timber forest products. It involves coordinated political action, improved access to forest resources, and experimentation with new tenure regimes. It calls for forest inventories in the hands of the community itself, and it demands cultural change that only our community can undertake. (Albert et al 2006:4)

As discussed in Chapter 6, by 2005-2006 government and industry task forces, as well as several new local control advocacy groups that had formed across the North, were framing the forestry crisis in contrasting ways. At the time, the strategy laid out in the Mayors' Group proposal clearly positioned NSFC with the local control movement. As a further example, the proposal included a regular council meeting resolution (#RC06462) signed by members of the Mayors' Group stating that as a first priority their newly formed NSFC regional organization would "promote community control of forests" (Albert et al 2006: 54).

The split between consultants was further represented in the proposed "governance and financing" breakdown that flowed money to the Strategic Planning Council and NTFP Corporation, both of which would be part of an overarching regional council (the Mayors) to be formed to "coordinate and fund shared activities" (Albert et al 2006: 16). A major conflict with this model emerged later because the regional council that was supposed to be coordinating and funding strategic and technical council projects was in turn advised by the paid consultants behind the councils and projects. Moreover, then CRDC Chair Richard Bignucolo provided a letter of support for the proposal (dated October 30, 2006), stating that CRDC would act as the "temporary body" for the NSFC through which "all agreements and funding [could] be funnelled" until CRDC staff and the proposal authors could establish the regional incorporated board that would assume administrative control. Dated October 31, 2006, the proposal was submitted to NRCAN from the CRDC on behalf of six towns. The CRDC EDO was lead author, followed by three others from the two consultant factions.

Concomitantly, several other influential events occurred while the FCP proposal was being developed and processed by the federal government. First, Ontario municipal elections occurred in fall 2006. This led to an important shift in municipal leadership and power relations among municipal leaders and consultants driving the original NSFC proposal. In particular, while discussing the timing and progression of the NSFC proposal process, several participants pointed to what one person called a "dividing line" (NSFC 3) in Chapleau that separated two local groups vying for control of economic development plans—the town hall and the arm's length CRDC. By August 5, 2006 the incumbent Mayor Earle Freeborn announced his plan to run for a fourth term ("Freeborn Seeks Another Term", *Chapleau Express*, August 5, 2006).

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Freeborn was well-experienced and had been re-elected by acclamation in the previous two elections. But prior to the September 2006 qualifying deadline, town councillor, CRDC Chair and local business leader Richard Bignucolo announced he would enter the mayoral race ("Bignucolo is running Mayoral Campaign with resident input", *Chapleau Express*, October 7, 2006). As the challenger, Bignucolo publicly framed his campaign in the context of the ongoing forestry crisis, focussing on a need for innovation and resource-based economic development:

> There are many opportunities awaiting us and we need to be ready to innovate around changes occurring in forestry, technology, and the environment. Our community is living through a difficulty [*sic*] period of transition and I will be pleased to represent the citizens of Chapleau through our change process.

In the weeks before the election, the local newspaper ran several articles on new or promising local business achievements featuring either the incumbent Mayor or the challenger. *Chapleau Express* featured Mayor Freeborn cutting ribbons and shaking hands with local entrepreneurs who publicly thanked him for his supporting their projects (e.g., "Start-up plans for bio-energy plant in Chapleau scheduled for 2007—Mayor Freeborn credited with helping to clear hurdles", November 4; "A giant step into the future—Aux Trois Moulins windmill begins operation", October 6). Notably, in early October 2006, Bignucolo was pictured travelling to Quebec under the auspices of CRDC with officials from MNR, Tembec and the lead author of the NSFC proposal to do reconnaissance for the blueberry project that was a key part of the technical aspect of the proposal ("Visiting Blueberry Production in Lac St. Jean, Quebec", October 2006).

Giving up his council seat to run against Mayor Freeborn, Bignucolo promoted CRDC's accomplishments and promise of new projects as a vehicle he would use to foster local change: "Just imagine what CRDC could accomplish if I were Mayor and could push the initiatives forward with my strong leadership" (*Chapleau Express*, November 4, 2006). Days before the election, Bignucolo's campaign sought to clarify his position in the CRDC and lay claim to local business successes: "In fact, the Chapleau Regional Development Corporation (CRDC), which I have co-founded and which I am currently Chair has been responsible for many of Chapleau's current innovations" (*Chapleau Express*, November 11, 2006).

The election was reportedly "a very tight race". The incumbent won by a margin of 85 votes (608 to 523), based on a 54 per cent voter turnout (*Chapleau Express*, "Freeborn at the Helm for next four years", November 18, 2006). While *Chapleau Express* mildly stated that "a few feathers were ruffled but everyone came out a winner", some participants said the race was heated at times and there were indeed clear winners and losers (NSFC 3; Local Enterprise 1, 2; Industry 9). Several participants (NSFC 3, 5; Local Enterprise 1, 2; Industry 9) linked to various sides of the election and NSFC proposal remembered how the outcome shaped local power relations and economic development. For example:

> There was the town hall that was funding the Chapleau economic development corporation. Now the CRDC chair ran for mayor same time as [Mayor Freeborn] did and it was a close race. [Mayor Freeborn] was elected—CRDC lost all their funding. What happened was while this was happening when CRDC lost their funding the town said 'we need to bring economic development back under the township banner so that we could have more control over it'. (NSFC 3)

Another participant explicitly corroborated this perception:

Industry 9: It was right near the election and then the election happened, then our Mayor chose to pull funding from [CRDC] and open up their other one.

Researcher: Do you know why the mayor pulled the funding for the regional development?

Industry 9: Would you want the guy that ran against you...? Everybody saw it.

Indeed the re-elected Mayor's plans were made public days after the election:

> The initiatives for which the Mayor will seek consensus from Council are: the creation of 100 new full time permanent jobs, update the Community Strategic Plan, *a full review by Council of all current economic development projects, [and] a renewed vision for community and economic development for Chapleau*" (emphasis added). (*Chapleau* Express, December 5, 2006)

A new economic development committee would be formed by the township during the winter of 2007, the Chapleau Economic Renewal Committee (CERC). CRDC became inactive as Mr. Bignucolo (the chair) and other volunteers withdrew. Discussed below, consultants and project ideas previously directed by CRDC then became linked with Chapleau municipal representatives and the Mayors' Group.

While the NSFC proposal was being processed by the federal government during the fall and winter of 2006-2007, further change occurred that realigned power relations among key actors involved in the NSFC proposal. Fall 2006 municipal elections also caused a roll over in the Mayors' Group, which brought in new mayors in White River and Manitouwadge. Moreover, the 2006 incumbent mayor of Dubreuilville would later step down in September 2007 (Personal communication, Township of Dubreuilville, April 13, 2010), and a new and less-informed mayor was appointed. Some participants (NSFC 3, 5) believed the roll over solidified Chapleau's leadership position on the NSFC project because Chapleau's Mayor was then the most senior and experienced, and Chapleau already had some staff associated with previous NTFP projects—both of which afforded organizational memory, capacity and leadership confidence. The above individuals also stated that incoming mayors and councillors were also trying to get up to speed and would defer to Chapleau without fully understanding the back-story.

7.2.4. Initial Planning and Operations

Some participants remembered being surprised that the NSFC proposal was successful (NSFC 1, 3, 5). Nonetheless, by spring 2007 the Mayors were informed that they had secured $1.6 million over five years to pursue their proposed projects. The funding news brought all the contributing consultants back: "everybody wanted a piece of the pie" (NSFC 9). In April 2007, the newly created Chapleau Economic Renewal Committee had hired a new EDO. The Mayors soon appointed this individual to oversee the creation of the strategic plan as required by NRCAN as the funding organization. Early observers of the proposal development and initial negotiation processes with the federal government reflected on a perceived conflict of interest, pointing to the prominent decision making influence of these consultants in directing mayoral decisions, for example:

> But certainly at the first meeting we went to [between NRCAN and the Mayors' Group], the proposal authors took a leadership role—the academics, who [were] working on it at the time. And we got a strong sense that it was a group of a lot of good ideas, but the municipal leaders were not the ones taking the lead at that meeting. (NSFC 12)

> In the initial part, yeah the consultants did swoop in and the problem there is not just the money went out the door, but I think there's a problem when the recipients of the money

are actually in the place to get their hands dirty and say, "we've made these decisions" as opposed to, "here is your plan". (NSFC 14)

[The Mayors] started out very heavily dependent on consultants and that was a big concern of ours actually. They had four consultants write their proposal that went into NRCAN two years ago. Those consultants, you know, sort of hung on to a certain degree. (NSFC 13)

However, the hiring of CERC's EDO was a catalyst in the eventual downgrading of relationships with hired consultants. As the new EDO was getting adjusted, the former CRDC EDO was working in a project management capacity, and Chapleau's forest product consultants were brought in to help revise the proposal and strategic plan, which would continue until fall 2007. But perceived conflict with the proposed organizational structure and financing arose immediately. As one participant pointed out: "[the consultants] built a structure that had two part-time consultant GMs reporting to nobody" (NSFC 3). As chair of the Mayors' Group, the Chapleau Mayor was informed by the new EDO that the organizational structure was flawed and that it would fail the towns, making everyone look foolish if implemented.

The Mayors had publicly reaffirmed their support for the INORD partnership and ongoing projects on the front page of the *Algoma News Review* as recently as March 17, 2007 ("The 'Elephant Project' Moves Along – NESMG"). However, scrutiny of the proposed role for INORD in the initial proposal and INORD's previous work for the Mayors' Group generated discomfort among the new EDO and Mayors, due to a perceived lack of return for $120,000 municipal investment. This triggered a legal dispute between the Mayors and INORD/Laurentian University over intellectual property. In short, some NSFC participants saw the dispute as a 'misunderstanding' related to the recent roll over in Mayors and staff (NSFC 5, 6, 9). However, others from the NSFC group and broader policy community perceived a conflict of interest and believed there was a lack of deliverables (NSFC 3, 4, 12, 14; Province/OMNR 2). As a result, while some of INORD's local control language was used to frame the NSFC Strategic Plan (2007-2011), proposed INORD projects were dropped and their previously amicable working relationship disintegrated during fall 2007.

Redesign of the organizational structure met with resistance by the remaining consultants who were being disconnected from decision making:

The biggest thing that [the consultants] fought... tooth and nail was that... the structure [was changed] so it reported to a GM and to a board. Committees with cross representation so everybody talks. The communities are represented on each of the committees so everyone is aware. Everyone can have their own opportunities. If you have a project... [there is now] a method of how you bring it in amidst existing projects from one of the communities, up through the system so that everybody gets a fair shake. (NSFC 3)

From a regional and organizational identity standpoint, the consultants were considered 'outsiders', which was deemed hypocritical by NSFC representatives (NSFC 3, 13) and also presented a practical challenge, for example:

...none of [the consultants] lived in the actual Northeast Superior Region. There was a great disconnect there from the actual work that was being done on the ground in terms of credibility, if you like, for the organization. It was probably a much harder sell to the members of the community you know if all the money is going outside the community to support consultants who come in and maybe do some work and then leave as opposed to trying to put some directly into the community, hire local people, and so on. So they recognize that... the mayors recognize that. After some discussion with [NRCAN], they began to sort of change their way of doing business.... They shouldn't be depending on outsiders to tell them what they should be doing. It has to come from inside. (NSFC 13)

The Mayors would accept a proposal by Chapleau's Mayor that the CERC EDO who was overseeing the proposal revisions be hired as general manager for the newly formed corporation (Albert et al 2006). In fact the proposal (Albert et al 2006: 56) included a letter of support dated October 23, 2006 and addressed to CRDC's EDO (lead author on the proposal) which outlined baseline cash funding ($80,000/ year for 5 years) for the NTFP corporation. Hired in October 2007, this individual became more directly involved in the normative planning behind the organization and projects (NSFC 3, 5, 7, 13). Thereafter, consultants were later systematically 'cut loose' due to the feeling that the region would not be successful if local representatives were not building their own future (NSFC 3). This signalled the final move to negate consultant control. It would also be significant for emerging organizational priorities and identity.

The NSFC organizational identity began to form when the general manager was hired to set up the corporation as a physical presence in Chapleau during the fall of 2007. It was at this same time that White River, Wawa and Dubreuilville were all reeling with mill closure announcements. Indeed, the plan always had been to establish an NTFP corporation in

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Chapleau; however, some participants indicated that this initially created some tension in the region. Not surprisingly, several individuals raised this 'issue' during the interviews, but qualified their own comments as general knowledge rather than of their own belief. A main part of the problem was how local media framed the funding announcement as Chapleau-centric (NSFC 6, 11; Municipal 10). In September 2007, *Northern Business News* printed a special report for forestry under the headline, "Forestry Funding Coming to Chapleau". The special report stated:

> A northeastern Ontario mill town will be the epi-centre of a movement to commercially harvest the wealth of Northern Ontario's alternative bio-products on a regional scale. With $1.6 million in seed funding from Ottawa, the town of Chapleau has been chosen to make it happen. The forestry town of 2,300 was selected in July as one of 11 sites across Canada for Natural Resources Canada's (NRCan) new Forest Communities Program (FCP).

All of the credit was given to the former CRDC EDO who was interviewed for the article, which focussed discussion on Chapleau's NTFP projects. Passing reference to the involvement of the other five towns and "three area First Nation communities" came in paragraph 10 and there was no mention of the Mayors' Group affiliation. Participants agreed the funding announcement was a major accomplishment for the region (NSFC 1, 7, 11), but this article sent mixed signals about the intended participants and distribution of benefits, and who was in control. It was also potentially damaging to the nascent identity of the organization.

Some former consultants and local business people (NSFC 5; Local Enterprise 1, 2; Industry 9) felt that Chapleau officials had outmanoeuvred the other towns and that most of the benefits would accrue there. However, NSFC participants downplayed this as a mix-up and as a residual effect of consultant influence and gloating (NSFC 6, 11). As one person summarized:

> So unfortunately, well the media which was driven by a couple of the consultants who were working on the proposal... 'Chapleau this... Chapleau that....' See that gets back to the old stuff right, where that shouldn't be happening. And Chapleau and the Mayors group and NSFC should have straightened that out right away because it's a harbinger of bad feelings for some communities. So they had to spend time smoothing that over. (NSFC 11)

Others thought this was a minor issue that did not affect the Mayors' working relationships (NSFC 7, 9, 10). Municipal (Municipal 10) and provincial (Province 6) representatives outside of Chapleau saw that the focus on Chapleau was unavoidable due to the location of the head office and staff. However, Chapleau's Mayor had also made it known that the NSFC would be Chapleau's economic development vehicle as the town was paying $80,000/year into the corporation, while the other five towns paid $10,000/year (NSFC 6; 7). This had much to do with Chapleau's initial plan for a solo application as well as the eventual transition of its new EDO into the general manager position. One NSFC participant acknowledged this arrangement might be a perceived challenge to some community members, but also noted they were confident it was not a problem:

> I don't at all see it as an issue. I think it demonstrates where we've got the capability and the willingness to work together cooperatively, and the province is listening... Superior Mayors' Group has been going on for 10 years and those issues have never come to the table. (NSFC 9)

In the spirit of unity, another participant simply cautioned: "We have to make sure it [the NSFC] represents the whole region" (NSFC 6).

Federal representatives commented that a main strength of the application was that it represented an established group of "politically-driven" and collaborating towns with a unified vision (NSFC 12, 13). A major transition occurred when the Mayors' Group later became the original board of directors for the newly formed organization: the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation. Participants remarked that it took some time for the nascent organization to get going:

> The program was announced in July of last year. They have spent most of the last year, the Northeast Superior Group, trying to get up and running, developing their strategic plan, and figuring out exactly what they were going to do, talking to various potential collaborators. And they've made some pretty good progress given the time it's been functioning. (NSFC 13)

> It took them a year to sort of figure what they really want to do. I mean they've got five years in the program but it took them to a year just to find out who is everybody... (NSFC 15)

Presumably, the delay had something to do with the fact that existing CRDC structure and staff had not been used as the original proposal intended and that the organizational structure and project goals had changed significantly. As one observer commented:

> This is the first year, so there were some kind of difficulties in getting up and running and then, 'what do we do, we don't have any ideas? The only ideas are the ones we had a long time ago.' You know so I think they'll get better. (NSFC 14)

The hiring of the new general manager and rollover in the Mayors' Group membership also worked to 'reset' stakeholder relationships in the network. By spring 2008, the OMNR, local forest companies and economic development groups were not engaged as had been originally proposed (NSFC 3, 4; Province/OMNR 4; Industry 9), for example:

> As far as functional connections, they haven't been made... and I don't know whether that's purposeful as the community forest tries to establish its power base because they're also staying away from the SFL's? They're like... 'we tried to talk to the community forest, you know, they will not return our calls. We tried asking what they're doing [and] whether we can play a part in it'. So that still needs to play out. Whether that's purposeful or whether they are still so much at the organizational stage that their heads have not wrapped around that yet. (Province/OMNR 4)

From an organizational identity and implementation standpoint, the most important groups to be excluded were the local First Nations. Discussed below, this move was initially damaging but subsequently was addressed by the NSFC board and staff with much motivation from First Nations.

7.2.5. Engaging First Nations: Northeast Superior Regional Chiefs Forum (NSRCF)

Interviews with First Nations representatives indicated that at the time the NRCAN proposal was submitted, relations between the Mayors' Group and First Nations were tenuous, and that the Mayors' expression of interest to collaborate with First Nations was viewed as 'tokenism' (NSFC 4; First Nations 3). Of the three First Nations listed as partners in the initial proposal (Albert et al 2006: 41), only the Chief of the Chapleau Cree First Nation provided a letter of support. The other two groups, Pic Mobert and Missanabie Cree First Nations, apparently had stated a "strong interest to participate in the project but more time [was] needed to explore their role in the project. This [would] be started immediately and letters of support [would] follow" (Albert et al 2006: 41). However, the letter of support from Chapleau Cree First Nation was later

retracted as they felt it was taken out of context. Band representatives felt they were initially misled on the nature of their participation and scale of the NSFC funding project (NSFC 4). Later interviews during the spring of 2008 and again in spring 2009 with First Nations (First Nations 2, 3, 4) representatives indicated a low level of awareness of and engagement with the NSFC.

Unsatisfied with their exclusion from the NSFC decision making, and seeing opportunity for more effective collaboration based on First Nations' traditional resource tenure and the capacity of non-Aboriginal communities, First Nations representatives indicated that they would intervene in project plans unless they were appropriately engaged:

> And so after the strategic plan came out and they [NSFC] stepped right into the trap, I went to them [NSFC] and said 'I warned you, I warned you, I warned you... and now your process is dead because you get your funding from the federal government... fiduciary obligation and you can't move forward without duty to consult on the infringement of Aboriginal rights. We're mounting a political campaign and we're shutting down this process right now. That was in 2007. (NSFC 4)

Several NSFC and First Nations representatives (NSFC 4, 7, 9, 11, 13; First Nations 3), including other municipal (10) and federal (4) representatives, acknowledged that the failure to approach First Nations early in the process later became a major problem, for example:

> That project kind of got stalled a little bit because the First Nations communities were not engaged (NSFC 9)

> I warned them [the Mayors] very early. I said I think you need to go and talk to First Nations right away. But that was ignored. They blew up... First Nations were pissed... had a meeting to talk to us: 'we have a role to play'. And they're [NSFC] still trying to fix that relationship. (NSFC 11)

> [The Mayors] started off wrong because they left First Nations out. (Municipal 10)

Some NSFC representatives explained that the initial proposal to NRCAN was advanced primarily due to perceived time constraints rather than malice (NSFC 3, 13).

Having no previous 'member' involvement in the Mayors' Group, First Nations planned to form their own regional group as a response to the perceived failings of regional natural resource and economic development policy making. The Northeast Superior Regional Chiefs

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Forum was intended as a counterpart to collaboratively critique the NSFC Strategic Plan, and was initiated so that the NSFC might better reflect a legitimate collaboration with First Nations.

In an initial step towards a meaningful partnership with First Nations, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between NSFC and Chapleau Cree First Nation (CCFN) in February 2008 wherein CCFN agreed to critique the Strategic Plan, circulate the critique to other area First Nations for comment, and host a regional First Nations meeting to assess common preferences for involvement among affected First Nations (CCFN 2008a: 1).

Soon after this arrangement was made, on March 2, 2008 NRCAN and Mayors' Group representatives travelled to Chapleau for the FCP contribution agreement signing event. One month later, on April 5, 2008, *Chapleau Express* featured Mayor Earle Freeborn, President of the NSFC, signing the agreement on behalf of Chapleau. The front page article, entitled "Northeast Superior Forest Community and Natural Resources Canada to launch new initiative", highlighted the history of collaboration among the six towns and federal funding as parts of the regional and federal response to economic crisis. Mayor Freeborn expressed gratitude for the funding, and stated that it would help "address the crisis facing our region's economy". He further identified participating communities and a prognosis based on conventional frames including natural resource dependence, the self-reliance of northerners, and economic values:

> All the communities of this region have been built because of our forest resource, and now our job is to come together as a collective to find sustainable new industries for our future economic wealth. The NSFC will be the catalyst to move these types of initiatives forward.

Mayor Whent of Wawa also expressed his support and framed the solution in economic terms. Notably, the article made no mention of First Nations, possibly because of the ongoing background work to foster positive municipal-First Nations relations. First Nations were however represented at the launch to show their support prior to full partnership (NSFC 3).

Following a regional meeting on March 31, 2008 between Chapleau Cree, Missanabie Cree, Brunswick House and Michipicoten First Nations (Hornpayne and Pic Mobert sent regrets), NSFC was offered a critique in April 2008 outlining general and specific points of agreement as well as those requiring modification and clarification. For example, aspects of the

Strategic Plan that supported youth development, education, forestry research, capacity building, and local control of resources were deemed congruent with First Nations values and objectives. Major points of contention related to the unclear role of First Nations in the project, references that First Nations had participated in regional capacity-building strategies (unbeknown to the First Nations themselves), the need for greater recognition of Aboriginal rights and potential contributions, as well as the validity of First Nations claims to biomass resources and sacredness of medical forest plants (CCFN 2008a: 7-8). Promoting a strong First Nations cultural and spiritual perspective, the proposed way forward included recommendations to redraft the Strategic Plan to elevate the profile of First Nations, garner formal support from interested First Nations, secure funding to assist First Nations participation and confirm First Nations representatives to sit on NSFC committees (CCFN 2008a: 19). NSFC worked to obtain additional funding from NRCAN to help the NSRCF enhance capacity for coordination and participation. This funding was combined with significant funds leveraged independently by First Nations (NSFC 3, 4, 13, 15).

Shortly thereafter an article written by the NSFC general manager, entitled "Co-operation Key to New Initiative Success", was published on the front page of the *Algoma News Review* on May 7, 2008. In part, the article appears to have been intended to help improve municipal-First Nations relations and address the need for community awareness promotion. The article introduced the new corporation as:

> ...a new initiative that although some may have heard of, has not been described in any great detail. There are questions in the community, in fact all the regional partner communities, surrounding who we are and what we are doing.

One third of the article was dedicated to discussing plans for First Nations relationship building, stressing that:

> One of the key priorities for the NSFC is to build strong relationships with the First Nations within our project boundaries. The Mayors of all six communities recognize that decisions involving lands and resources cannot be made without the direct involvement of area First Nations. Now that process funding has been secured, the NSFC is committed to advancing an aggressive relationship building initiative with the seven First Nations located within the geography of the Forest Community initiative.

Such public recognition of First Nations rights and plans to foster partnerships through relationship building exercises indicates a reframing of organizational identity.

NSFC directors and staff further recognized the authority of First Nations to steer the process—but, equally important— the positive opportunities to work together with First Nations. However, the agreement to work together did not create an automatic friendship. First Nations, NSFC staff and resource people, the Mayors and OMNR representatives all acknowledged that collaboration was very important but also admitted that there was ongoing conflict (NSFC 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15; First Nations 3; Industry 1; Federal 4). As of fall 2008, First Nations had selected one individual to represent them jointly as a NSFC voting board member. Personality conflicts were noted by several individuals (NSFC 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11; Province/OMNR 4, 8), signalling additional challenges to be overcome. Many were optimistic that this would be resolved (NSFC 1, 3, 4, 7), a sign of mutual commitment to collaboration.

Moreover, the fact that NSFC had only one individual as a point of contact representing up to nine area First Nations created confusion and mistrust for some NSFC and First Nation representatives. Although relationship building and improving cross-cultural understanding were identified as important objectives by NSRCF and NSFC, there were concerns for mutual information sharing and financial disclosures, as well as about a lack of mayoral cross-representation on the NSRCF (NSFC 3, 4, 7). Some (NSFC 3, 6, 8, 11) characterized the First Nations representative as playing a gate keeping role, for example:

> ...the issue is First Nations are being driven by somebody outside of this community... it's taken a consultant from [outside the region] to drive them and get them together, 'this is what our thoughts should be on this' and holding their hands through the process—taking the leadership of it—and it's not somebody internal who's doing that. So it always leaves us to the situation where is this [the consultant] or is this the Chiefs? (NSFC 3)

Conversely, one NSFC representative identified perceived personal and practical challenges that they shared with First Nations and explained their situations were basically the same:

> First Nations Chiefs are like myself. They're interested. They're busy. They've got a lot of issues. So they [NSRCF] are using one common facilitator to do their letter writing and their presentations, as we rely on our CAOs or [NSFC general manager]. So it's quite similar. (NSFC 9)

Participants stated that an added challenge for First Nations was that they were working in parallel to regenerate their own culturally appropriate governance structures and relationships at the local and regional scale (NSFC 4; First Nations 3). First Nations also noted that reconciliation and trust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities would not be obtainable as a short-term objective. This mismatch in time scales was identified by First Nations from the outset in the critique of the Strategic Plan (CCFN 2008a).

Interviews during May 2009 indicated a desire to have all the Mayors and Chiefs get together to discuss how working relationships could be developed. NSFC representatives (NSFC 3, 6, 7, 8, 11) believed that getting together would be constructive and would help initiate personal relationships and develop understanding of similarities and differences as the basis for a working relationship, for example:

> They need to have the Mayors and the Chiefs get together, right, not just this little weak conduit. Do that twice or three times a year because through their familiarity develops good relationships... when everybody hears what everybody else is saying. (NSFC 11)

Ironically, some thought it was still too early to meet due to perceived differences on both sides:

> We haven't had a meeting between the Chiefs and the Mayors, although it has been identified as an objective. Although it's my personal view that the timing is not right for that yet because we still have some relationship building to do to ensure that when we do put them together that comes up with a constructive result, as opposed to something else going wrong. (NSFC 4)

An additional challenge to developing common understanding of problems and solutions and to forming a shared identity was disagreement between the NSFC president and the First Nations representative on a parallel project being pursued by NSRCF (NSFC 1, 3, 4, 6, 11). As one participant explained:

> One of our biggest things is the relationship building with First Nations. That's in the works. A lot of stuff the First Nations would like to do, the Mayors don't agree with. Like we have to kind of meet in the middle. Both sides have to take a loss sometimes. When you're used to doing something a certain way and somebody comes in and says 'we don't like that' it's a big learning curve. And it's not something that's going to evolve overnight or be solved in the year. It's going to take time to do that. And both sides are committed to doing that. (NSFC 1)

The major point of friction was First Nations' plan for co-management of the Chapleau Crown Game Preserve, which if implemented would potentially reduce logging and therefore wood supply for the Tembec mill at Chapleau. For First Nations, this approach was about "culturally appropriate community development" and the "need to reconcile historical conflicts with the Crown" in order that First Nations' identity, economy and self-government could be restored and maintained, based on their connection to the land (CCFN 2008b: 5). Participants (NSFC 4, 5, 7) stated that the disagreement was out in the open and that Chapleau's Mayor was forthright in his explanation to First Nations and others that he could not support a reduced harvest in the CCGP or elsewhere that would jeopardize local jobs—this seemed counterintuitive given all the mill closures in neighbouring towns. While First Nations admitted that co-management would mean reduced cutting in the CCGP, they did not want to put Tembec out of business and suggested that OMNR could make up the created supply deficit with fibre that was available elsewhere 'on paper' (i.e., according to OMNR resource inventories). One participant acknowledged the importance of both perspectives and attributed this impasse to

> status quo communities who say, 'we can't give up what's there now. We're willing to talk to you as long as we don't lose anything'. So where there's operating mills... not as much in Hornepayne... there has to be a will to talk about it at the table. (NSFC 6)

This schism at the NSFC board level was also noted regarding potential fibre reallocations in White River:

> I really see that it's really polarized. There are people that really believe that communities, to have a bigger stake in the resource, to be able to control some of it to be able to generate wealth, you know, we need to be able to have a stake to be able to say what some of those resources are going to be used for. It's the other side that says that we need to make sure that the lumber companies that are operating here stay operating here. So there's a shift of people that don't want to rock the boat because in Chapleau we still have a mill... if you don't want to do anything that's going to jeopardize the situation that's tenuous enough. Then you get the people from White River saying that our forest isn't being used, they're cutting it and shipping it out, and [they] I don't want that... (NSFC 3)

Conventional attitudes and protectionism from leaders were undermining NSFC's intention to 'think differently' and transform local power relations. Instead, NSFC project plans focussed on funding concrete economic development projects likely to demonstrate deliverables

(jobs), and deemphasizing early plans for strategic policy development in support of meaningful local control over resources, whether for non-Aboriginal or Aboriginal communities.

7.3. Initial Project Focus

The NSFC mainly pursued project work on non-timber forest products, bioenergy, and capacity building to promote economic opportunities. Efforts focussed on developing the organizational capacity to manage and operate what was essentially a local economic development and forest research organization that supported consultant-based feasibility research. NSFC's approach was to develop a portfolio of feasibility studies in order to present business opportunities to would-be investors and entrepreneurs, local or otherwise. Federal money provided to foster community involvement in forestry solutions was mainly being channelled through local and non-local consultants who could do the front-end work on studies intended to provide eventual returns to the communities when business opportunities were implemented.

By fall 2009, Level Plains Inc. had begun a nearly 165 ha blueberry plantation on private land at Wawa with support from the NSFC and NOHFC; the much earlier plans for Chapleau had been delayed due to a lack of supporting provincial policy and an entrepreneur to carry the project forward (NSFC 3, 7). However, OMNR and industry partners remained supportive of NSFC's blueberry project plans (NSFC 13)[14]. NTFP research projects were also expanding with Canadian universities. Entrepreneurs with business ideas were also contacting NSFC for start-up assistance, ranging from funding to local networking.

Conversely, the application originally accepted by the federal government stressed the perceived need for self-reliance and cultural and institutional reform. Reflecting those aspirations, the issues of tenure reform and the need to develop value-added processing and non-timber forest products were at centre stage in the first section of the proposal (Albert et al 2006). One early participant observed a shift in direction: "…when they started, when they put their proposal in back in 2007, they were talking about things like tenure" (NSFC 13). When the

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[14] In late April 2010, Algoma-Manitoulin MPP Mike Brown announced $50,000 in provincial funding would be given the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation to explore regional economic opportunities for commercial blueberry cultivation. The funding would be used to locate appropriate sites in the each of the participating NSFC towns (Ontario News North 2010, http://www.karinahunter.com/?p=11062).

proposal was written, the focus on local control of forests and developing local talent for community economic development stood in contrast to concurrent forest industry appeals to government for increased security for industrial fibre allocations and reduced energy costs, for example, in order to create a more competitive business environment. One participant commented that the Mayors had worked with consultants to build a winning proposal based on alternative forest use and local political control only to "depoliticize" by softening their pursuit of local control and tenure issues once federal funding was secured and NSFC was established (NSFC 5).

Against the backdrop of sweeping mill closures and local control advocacy, the FCP and NSFC program direction met with direct public criticism. An earlier article in the *Sault Star* ("Forest-dependent towns have a brighter future than you might think", June 27, 2008) written by then FCP Program Director, Steve Dominy, of NRCAN promoted NSFC and FCP as

> ...one way the government of Canada is stimulating a different conversation in the forest sector to help address the challenges being faced.... It is people living and working in our forest-dependent communities who will greatly influence the direction of change. They care about the forest and know it can continuously offer many products and services to their community. These residents have the will and imagination required to lead change towards ingenious solutions.

While the above article implied a need for change and greater community involvement, on July 4, 2008 a very direct response was published in the *Sault Star*, entitled "Forest tenure arrangement needs changing". A retired CFS employee and forest technician questioned the effectiveness of the federal program and Mr. Dominy's sentiments, pointing out that the forestry crisis was fundamentally a result of the failing Crown forest tenure system:

> The federal monies going into the Forest Communities Program may sound good. However, what can a community or group of communities hope to gain from this federal proposal? The federal government has no jurisdiction over natural resources in Ontario. Research and study with federal dollars will not provide long-term employment opportunities and enterprise development without a change in forestland tenure arrangements. (Opinion piece by Fred Haavisto, *Sault Star,* Friday, July 4, 2008: A8).

Several NSFC representatives did see the need to explore tenure reform and opportunities for pilot projects of various kinds (NSFC 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13; First Nations 3). Many

acknowledged that the OMNR had management jurisdiction over the forests but that NSFC could develop partnerships and research as vehicles to drive change and learning about forest land tenure. OMNR's March 2009 announcement that the tenure system would be reviewed meant that it was no longer a "taboo" topic, as one participant stated it had been back when the NSFC was forming (NSFC 6). Some reflecting on the development of the NSFC thought the organization should try to develop a model and/or policy for how tenure arrangements might change (NSFC 4, 13, 14, 15; Industry 1), for example:

> I'd like to see them bring the tenure issue very much to the forefront right now. This is critical with the Minister's announcement in Sudbury and in fact the ministries behind tenure reform I think they would be really... I think they'll miss a golden opportunity here to be put on the map. I would see them for example being a pilot project for an alternative tenure mechanism. (NSFC 13)

Others were more reserved in their assessment of NSFC's perceived role, concentrating instead on understanding the various arrangements being tabled and how they could adapt to what they saw as 'inevitable' provincial policy changes to the tenure system (NSFC 3).

Municipal and First Nations representatives in towns where mills had closed were interested and in some cases actively pursuing community-based tenure over former industry licences. Collaborative community-based SFLs were in various stages of development for both White River-Pic Mobert First Nation and Manitouwadge-Marathon-Pic River Ojibway throughout 2008 and 2009 ("Rural communities view to be Sustainable Forest Licence Holders", *Northern Ontario Business*, March 2010; "Town, band buy Domtar plant"; *Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal*, June 2009). It is ironic that municipal government and First Nations involved in the NSFC were developing partnerships in support of local control and alternative forest resource development, but doing so outside of the NSFC forum, while similar and innovative First Nations-led co-management plans were not receiving support through NSFC.

7.4. Evolving Organizational Frames and Power Relations in the NSFC

7.4.1. Framing and Reframing the Problem: NSFC Diagnostic Frames

As illustrated in the above discussion, a drive for self reliance and to 'do things differently' led to the formation of the Mayors' Group that subsequently evolved into the NSFC. As presented

previously in Chapter 6, the earliest experience by local leadership with layoffs and mill closures highlighted the total lack of communication with local mills (e.g., "We never saw it coming" – Chapleau Mayor, 2004) and a perceived indifference of senior governments to the effects of the forestry crisis in Northern Ontario (e.g., "unfortunately the province is not willing to move as quickly as is required" – Wawa Reeve, 2003; "our municipality is trying to... get the ear of the provincial government. I don't think we have it in Northern Ontario" – White River Mayor, 2003).

The formation of the Mayors' Group and NSFC was linked to the efforts of collaborating individuals who, questioning the apparent failures of policy and management, reframed the problem in trying to identify promising new paths. All participants explained the current forestry crisis in terms of the many economic factors affecting the existing industry (outlined in Chapter 6), thereby acknowledging substantive facts emanating from the dominant social framings of the problem provided by industry/government reports and the media. However, rather than passively accepting this diagnosis and the prescribed actions to fix the existing industry, municipal representatives pressed to identify more fundamental causes of the overall problem and developed their own nuanced understanding.

For some in the NSFC, a change in the vision and policies surrounding forest tenure was judged to be at the heart of the matter (e.g., NSFC 4, 5, 9, 11, 14). Citing the failure of provincial forest policy and the Crown tenure system, participants underscored what they saw as the more fundamental aspects of the 'real' problem, that is, a lack of local control and economic diversity. This framing of the problem explains the initial focus of the NSFC proposal on projects for NTFPs, policy and tenure innovation, and bio-energy. Although much of the early direction of the NSFC can be attributed to paid consultants from other areas of Northern Ontario, the adoption of these problem frames came through "simple dialogue" (NSFC 6) in an alternative forum and through double-loop learning modes intended to 'do the right thing' for their communities based on common interests. One participant (NSFC 5) remembered that the Mayors were "excited" overall about these new possibilities but that some were more reserved in their judgement, given potential conflicts over Crown resources with operating mills. Still, the focus shifted from solving the problems of the current forest industry to redefining community

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culture and relationships with forest ecosystems and how they ought to be managed and used in order to benefit northern populations.

Significant differences emerged in NSFC diagnostic framings and about which ones would actually guide action. For example, the gradual downgrading of relationships with consultants who were willing to publicly criticize provincial forest policy and provide leadership for reforming the tenure system (i.e., INORD) enabled NTFP feasibility studies to eclipse this facet of the NSFC proposal. Participants described a hesitance among the Mayors to pursue tenure reform because it was 'very political' (NSFC 13) and 'taboo' (NSFC 6). Referring to the change in direction, one participant commented:

> …the focus [of the NSFC] needs to be a how do you develop a campaign to get increased control of the forests locally? The Mayors kinda backed away from that. They got scared. (NSFC 5)

Local political appetite for change was tempered with caution, given that some local leaders did not want to support projects or actions that might jeopardize the two operational mills (Chapleau and Hornepayne). As long-time residents of Northern Ontario, most were also accustomed to resource development driving the local economy.

7.4.2. The Solutions: Prognostic Frames

The lack of local control was considered by some actors to be the root of the problem. It is not surprising that increased local control was considered a main part of the solution. Participants suggested that increased local control could take on a variety of tenure forms. However, this change in control was mainly envisioned through municipal involvement or more opportunities created for local business and other stakeholders by securing timber allocations for specialized value-added manufacturing, rather than only conventional large-scale commodity-based operations such as sawmills. Indeed, communities that independently pursued SFL takeovers (e.g., White River- Pic Mobert First Nation) did so with combined plans to develop energy, non-conventional as well as conventional products.

An important distinction can be made between those who were unsure about the benefits of total local control of forest ownership (e.g., NSFC 3, 6, 7), emphasizing instead the need for

more meaningful collaborative partnerships between industry and municipalities, and those who supported municipal and First Nations involvement in Crown timber allocation processes (NSFC 4, 5, 11, 14). Others were more absolute about the need to "wrestle control away from industry" (NSFC 4). Another participant stated:

> On the forestry issue, I think the municipalities need to be consulted more. And that goes way back to the tenure issue. See no one wants to touch it. If it were me and I were a Mayor, I'd say 'you're God damn right I want that [forest tenure]'. (NSFC 11)

Others were more open to any combination that would create conditions for a viable forest economy (NSFC 1, 8, 10, 16). Whatever the solution, they believed that the onus was on the local people to make it happen because industry and government were not seen to be motivated to support change. A shift away from the conventional thinking about and acceptance of industry-dominated forests and communities is indicative of double-loop learning processes among some NSFC participants. However, aside from ongoing partnership work with OMNR and industry for blueberry plantations, this objective was pursued individually by partner towns. Proposed mill takeovers and First Nations co-management were not pursued through NSFC in that these projects were not unanimously endorsed by the Mayors.

NSFC participants said that through their experience with the NSFC and forestry crisis they had gained an appreciation for the complexity of forestry in Northern Ontario, and specifically in their region. Despite their differences, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members said they had learned that they had to work together with the other communities, instead of competing with one another (First Nations 3; NSFC 4, 6, 7, 8, 11). One participant referred to this as "regional thinking" (NSFC 6), indicating a need to think about neighbouring towns and First Nations as part of a system (indicative of double-loop learning, see Keen et al 2005):

> It's our interest to ensure that there's operations in the region. Collectively within the six Mayors, they see it that way. The Weyerhaeuser shutdown, 130 workers or whatever it was, equally affected Chapleau because they were on the wood operations side... they were the truckers... so they lost big time also. So it's interconnected and we came to know that. It's like a card house, you pull one card out and the rest come down. We may not always agree, but we recognize that each card is important. What's good for one is good for all of us. (NSFC 6)

This change in perspective supported the development of a common place- and interest-based identity. Many expressed a preference and need for regional actors to collaborate in order to overcome what were viewed as 'northern problems' (First Nations 3; NSFC 4, 6, 7, 10). Once funding was secured, NSFC staff planned to systematically engage regional actors from First Nations, industry, parks, universities and other government organizations. Admittedly, this was slow to occur (NSFC 1, 3, 13, 15). Plans for growing partnerships would not be limited to industry and government, but were intended to move the discussion into an accessible public forum in which diverse perspectives and ideas could be shared and integrated into policy and practice.

The emergence of the Mayors' Group and the later formation of the NSFC represent such a forum. Mainstream debates among industry, labour and government focused on single-loop learning solutions, such as how to lower energy prices and delivered wood costs, and how to tweak fibre flows to improve the competitiveness of existing industry. In contrast, the NSFC set out to develop solutions to diversify the forest economy, which later took the form of NSFC projects for identifying new products (e.g., NTFPs). Emerging from bottom-up collaboration, the problem was reframed as a challenge caused by limited local access to fibre which in turn stifled innovation and northern talent. Consequently, the NSFC placed additional value on the need to develop local solutions rather than only focussing on attracting the next big investor to the region. Local leaders' shifting assumptions regarding the role of local resources and enterprise in diversification, and the perceived importance of creating local access to fibre, indicates double-loop learning.

7.4.3. Identity and Characterisation Frames

Organizational identity frames evolved throughout the process of development. The reframing of identity first for the NESMG and then NSFC was a key to initial collaboration because actors recognized they needed to work together to solve their common problems rather than competing as individual communities. However, this reframing was questioned by two separate large industry representatives who were accustomed to competition between towns for industrial opportunities, for example:

Industry 3:   I like what you're saying that these Mayors think that 'ok as long as we have

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development in our region'...

Researcher: ...*They're* saying it.

Industry 3:   *They're* saying it? Then that's good to hear. It's encouraging [laughs doubtfully].

However, there was a strong commitment to working together and generally positive rapport between all of the mayors and local resource persons interviewed. Direct observation of both a Mayors' Group meeting (in Dubreuilville) and a later NSFC meeting (in Hornepayne) confirmed this and upheld similar interview evidence from those within (NSFC 3, 7, 9, 13) and outside (e.g., Municipal 14; Provincial 6, 8) of the organization. The Mayors formed a common identity based on their shared history of challenges and successes in local politics and local culture that contributed to what could be described as a sort of unconditional support for both individual preferences and overlapping interests. This identity was propagated through their common voice which both municipal representatives and observers in senior governments and across the region recognized. While the common identity and voice they developed was empowering, it contributed to a common discourse that also worked to limit dissent within their group.

Bridging the NSFC identity beyond local leadership to the community level was a challenge. The NSFC organization admittedly failed to engage residents and local stakeholders early on (NSFC 1, 2, 3, 11, 13). This may have occurred in part because the formation of a lasting and collective organizational identity was delayed by ongoing competition between consultants and municipal officials over what the NSFC should or would be. There was also a rollover in municipal leadership and hiring of new staff which produced a steep learning curve at a formative process stage (2006-2008).

Some participants stated that early on the NSFC staff and board had a mixed and uncertain vision for the nascent organization (NSFC 3, 6, 14, 15; Industry 9). The general manager's public letter in the *Algoma News Review* on May 2008 hinted at this challenge: "Our organization is a new one. Although these communities have partnered for many years, we have

not come together in such a big way until now." One participant stated that a challenge to developing a NSFC marketing strategy was "first, I guess developing what the message is going to be and then getting it out" (NSFC 3).

In May and June 2008, numerous participants within each partnering town characterised the NSFC as having no visible or vocal presence at the community level, indicating a low level of community engagement and awareness, for example:

> Number one in my opinion is a complete lack of communication from that organization. (Municipal 10)

> ...people don't know who they are. People have no idea that Natural Resources Canada is giving money to the Northeast Superior Region. People don't know that. (NSFC 2)

Some suggested that even involved municipal representatives had little understanding:

> I would suggest that if you went into individual councils, you'd get the same answer... municipal councils... even though their mayor is there, city councils themselves don't really know a lot about it [NSFC]. That's because the NSFC has *not* done a good job promoting themselves. (NSFC 11)

As discussed above, OMNR staff also wondered whether this was an intentional move by NSFC or whether it was a matter of limited capacity (Province 4). Although public workshops were to be held in each of the partner communities during the summer and fall of 2008, four were cancelled after the first two meetings in Wawa and Hornepayne were very poorly attended (six people). Low turnout was attributed to bad timing during the summer months and to public apathy (NSFC 1, 3, 10).

To address these challenges, a marketing and communications position was posted on July 19, 2008 (*Chapleau Express*) and temporarily filled (until June 2009) by an individual working at a satellite office in Wawa. Overall, NSFC representatives thought the placement in Wawa was positive, but this created logistical challenges for the organization (NSFC 1, 2, 3). With the departure of their first hire, the marketing and communications contract position remained vacant again until December 2009.

Despite inconsistent public outreach and marketing development efforts, by May 2009 some participants indicated that efforts to build relationships with potential partners had improved:

> They're just now at the stage where people are starting to realize that they're there. So like one of the things that they're doing is meeting with different agencies like Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and FedNor... you know, having one-on-one meetings... because right now they're probably not that familiar with Northeast Superior and what they are doing. (NSFC 15)

> You know MNR is asking me... 'what's happening at NSFC? We're not hearing from them?' To me they [NSFC] need to be... meeting with Bondar, meeting with the key managers there. They've done it to a limited degree... (NSFC 13)

As evinced by interviews with community members in May 2009, ongoing challenges to stimulate public awareness within the region led to different characterisations of the NSFC. Some community organizations described NSFC as "working behind the scenes" (Province 13), while other community members were suspicious and felt that NSFC was not being transparent enough (Industry 9; Local Enterprise 1, 2).

The reframing of organizational identity to include First Nations marks a critical transformation achieved through more meaningful collaboration. While some First Nations were listed as partners, the initial proposal framed organizational identity in a manner that totally excluded First Nations: "As a regional organization, however, based on the authority of the elected councils the mayor's group is clearly a legitimate representative of the people of the entire region" (Albert et al 2006: 7). Although some First Nations were listed as partners in the NSFC proposal and later Strategic Plan, they were confused by mixed signals from the organization and had difficulty identifying with project:

> In some cases First Nations are presented as partners and in others areas they are viewed as stakeholders... the Strategic Plan lists the name and population of the seven First Nations whose territories are covered by the scope of the Strategic Plan, implying they are partners in the process, yet the site description map...highlights the location of involved municipalities but not the affected First Nations. (CCFN 2008a: 8)

Part of this challenge was that NSFC was working to adapt previous work done by consultants and were unsure of how First Nations would be involved. The rollover in mayors and

consultants and the hiring of new staff provided an important window for First Nations to assert their interests while the organization was still developing.

7.4.4. Power Frames

7.4.4.1. Authority and Resources

NSFC respondents considered either the provincial government or forest industry to have the most power, followed by First Nations, confirming perceptions outlined in Chapters 5 and 6. The source of power most often identified with provincial government and First Nations was again legal authority, with the latter's rights being recognized by the courts, for example:

> Aboriginal people have pre-existing inherent rights to the land that they grant to the Crown, not the other way around" (NSFC 4).

> Their power is legitimate Treaty Rights. (NSFC 14)

NSFC representatives respected that First Nations could intervene with project plans (e.g., NSFC 1, 8, 11) based on their legal authority; some felt this authority was used as a threat to sway support for First Nations objectives as part of the NSFC (NSFC 7). As discussed above, it was area First Nations who insisted on having meaningful involvement with the Mayors, suggesting that some coercion was necessary.

While First Nations' authority regarding natural resources was widely recognized, this was seen to be limited by a lack of capacity. Many non-Aboriginal NSFC representatives encouraged First Nations' involvement and projected their capacity to increase in the future (NSFC 3, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15). As outlined above, the NSRCF initiative was partially funded by NRCAN through the NSFC to help provide resources for capacity building.

At the same time, the view that industry had the capacity to unduly influence due to its political affiliation and capital/resources always seemed to arise:

> In terms of forestry, I think that companies still have way too much influence. They hold the [Sustainable Forest Licences]. They're the ones who hold the factories and the assets. They're the ones who employ the people. [Ministry of Natural Resources] has influence of course, but then again it's the forestry companies who are contributing to the campaigns. (NSFC 11)

NSFC participants believed that industry had too much power and that communities were excluded from decision making (NSFC 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13, 14). This frame was linked closely with problem and solution frames for tenure reform and support for alternative wood uses, both thought to be constrained by current institutional arrangements, for example:

> *NSFC 9* ...any one of these communities is not open to any forest related opportunities right now because the province won't license you and... industry is in control of fibre.
>
> *Researcher* So you can't get access to fibre?
>
> *NSFC 9* Not whatsoever... not whatsoever. So you're almost like a hostage, right.

Legal authority and sheer resources (e.g., capital, financial, human) suggest a capacity to influence through coercion or forced action, but the ability to constrain potential actions was viewed to be more important. For example, NSFC did have ongoing working relations with Tembec and OMNR for its blueberry project plans; however, it was made clear to NSFC and OMNR that the company would not support the project if it would negatively affect its wood supply (NSFC 3). Working together with industry and OMNR on Chapleau's blueberry project no doubt constrained opinions among Chapleau representatives who also wanted to maintain local forestry jobs but did want to pursue new opportunities (Municipal 14; NSFC 7). Moreover, the ability of industry to control government forest policy agendas and ensure inaction was a central observation among those who perceived the need for tenure reform (NSFC 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14), for example:

> We think the Crown is but they're not [laughing]. They're not. The wood industry... the companies themselves are managing the Crown. (NSFC 9)
>
> Well it should be MNR right, but I have a feeling that the corporate agenda, not only does it influence the MNR, I think it really scares the living crap out of them to be honest with you. I think the corporate agenda has the upper hand. (NSFC 14)

While NSFC was to embrace different ideas and innovation, some NSFC leaders had difficulty envisioning forest management outside of the long dominant forestry discourse. For example, when asked if there were other actors who *should be* involved in forest management on public land, one participant framed the response in the context of maintained industrial forestry:

> Forest companies don't want other people involved. [They're] very protective of their resource, first of all, and what they do. That's why they're sort of reluctant to do things together with value-added... I really don't know how to answer that question? *I don't know who would be suitable to support the forest industry?* (NSFC 7)

Conversely, based on legal authority and resources, municipalities and the federal government were not seen as powerful actors relative to the OMNR and the forest industry (triangulated by the survey findings in Chapter 5). The view was that municipalities were powerless because industry and government did not consult them or ignored them altogether (NSFC 6, 11), for example:

> You don't get the industries sitting down at the table with you. So they're running as an independent organization disconnected from the communities. Now it doesn't mean they don't do a responsibility, but industries tend not... when it comes down to their own economic survival, they tend not to work with communities directly very much. (NSFC 6)

NSFC participants also did not consider themselves to have much influence on the only agenda that really mattered (i.e., forestry), for example:

> Certainly the mayors and local councillors have no influence at all. (NSFC 14)

> We don't have much power. The only power is what we give ourselves. (NSFC 11)

Ironically, the Mayors overlooked that the federal government had endorsed their unconventional project plans—a vision developed by the early discursive work of the Mayors and consultants—by providing considerable funding and links to an international research network. This later helped create a formal collaborative forum (the NSFC) right in the shadow of the region's traditionally dominant stakeholders (i.e., forest industry and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources). This support also boosted municipal influence through increased relational power (discussed below). The federal government was funding the revolution, so to speak. As the network and its thinking evolved, it gained power and legitimacy through its individual municipal affiliations as well as its association with one another, the Aboriginal communities, and the federal government which supported their vision for local control. The formation of these relationships between traditionally marginalized actors served to subvert the power of conventional forest management structures by creating new structures and learning agendas. As

a result, even though the Mayors, and subsequently the newly formed NSFC, had no formal authority over forest resource management decision making, they were not powerless.

Other noteworthy sources of resource power were the main funding agencies in Northern Ontario business and development. These were Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (Ministry of Northern Development and Mines), Community Futures Corporations and FedNor, which were mentioned time and again, for example:

> Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation has been very supportive lately and I should also say FedNor's very supportive of Northern Ontario economic opportunities both to the traditional groups that support us. (NSFC 11)

These and other sources of funding gained prominence in the absence of large industry employers. Evidently many local projects, whether for infrastructure, strategic planning, and economic development interns, for example, were funded and assisted by these agencies. As of June 2010, large amounts of money were soon flowing to NSFC from these federal and provincial sources (NSFC 3).

7.4.4.2. Relational Power

The relational power of the Mayors' Group was remarked upon numerous times by participants (Industry 10; NSFC 7, 8, 9, 11). Many interpreted government and community recognition of their association and successes as a sign that any power they had, in the eyes of others, stemmed from coordination and cooperation, for example: "We are held up as an example in the North in terms of communities cooperating" (NSFC 11). In particular, various NSFC representatives commented on how ongoing invitations for the Mayors to meet with political representatives (i.e., the Ontario Premier; Ministers from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, and Ministry of Municipal Affairs) and associations (Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities), the awarding of the FCP site, and purported formation of 'mayors groups' in other parts of Northern Ontario validated their relational power (Industry 10; NSFC 7, 8, 11). Over time, this was also central to the development of the organizational identity of the Mayors Group and NSFC. Reframing a regional identity through regular interaction and overcoming adversarial positions helped to mutually empower each town internally but also as perceived from 'outside'

as their association gained political recognition: "I mean that was the whole gravitation to the Mayors' Group was strength in numbers" (NSFC 9).

At the same time, the structural power emanating from their association worked at times to limit dissent. The Mayors had created a syndicate to lobby senior government based on a previously identified shared set of interests. Many participants referred to the importance of their common voice or the idea that all of the Mayors in the region were singing the same tune, for example:

> The whole region has to survive and we have to do it together. It brings a strong voice to government as well. You know when you have six mayors that sit down with the minister and talk the same talk... That's the way we're going to win. (NSFC 7)

Mobilizing common framings of problems and solutions exercised the relational power of the Group through propagating a shared discourse. As mentioned above, the Mayors recognized that providing common support for individual or group projects, whether through letters of support or funding, helped every community in the long term. However, this pledge could also limit debate. Projects potentially politically detrimental to the Group, such as the White River-Pic Mobert First Nation buyout plan with Domtar, were not supported by 'the table' (NSFC 7).

Organization of the Regional Chiefs Forum was also seen to boost the relational power of First Nations with respect to lobbying governments for change:

> ...we're going to be stronger number one as a voice. It's not just one person, one Chief, me [and] my Chief standing there saying 'this is wrong'. It's a group of First Nations saying 'no'. (First Nations 3)

Much like the Mayors, First Nations collaborative efforts were also gaining support from government agencies:

> ... we're kind of looking at them as a role model for the rest of the province. They seem to have a pretty good idea. First Nations tend to follow what other First Nations are doing... 'well that's a really good idea, let's do that'. So we figured [what] if we could stimulate almost pilot projects. We've been saying for years that First Nations need to partner up here because try as they might they are not going to get an opportunity for each one individual. They have to form some kind of a cooperative. So in this case being six or seven should be a pretty good forest opportunity there and they seem like a pretty good role model. (NSFC 15)

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And, as First Nations became more organized through their collective forum, their power was evident at the level of NSFC negotiations, for example:

> Now that they're starting to speak as a collective, they have a lot more impact on what happens. They have a lot more say in how we drive the process. (NSFC 3)

Although still at an early stage in the NSFC, participants forecast strength would come through building municipal-First Nations relationships, for example:

> And the more they [First Nations] educate themselves, the more they're being active in all the processes that are being involved, which is a great thing. It's just that a new way for us too, it's a whole new kind of dynamic that we need to consider. I mean, it's a great thing, it's really good to see ...the mayors have been endorsing them one hundred percent, they're supportive of the First Nations in the region as well. I mean, I think we're on to something, with the First Nations and the municipalities working together. We're going to have something here that nobody has anywhere. It's going to be really interesting to see how it plays out. (NSFC 3)

The fall 2008 addition of First Nations collective voice and advance of their issues within the NSFC (i.e., reframing of identity) illustrates the effectiveness of relational power for mobilizing groups previously excluded from regional development efforts.

7.4.4.3. Positional Power

Some participants were also seen to have positional power that elevated their decisions and/or frames in group situations, such as at board meetings. At least four individuals referred to the positional power and experience of Chapleau's Mayor as President and Chair of the NSFC and Secretary Treasurer of the Canadian Model Forest Network, for example:

> ...there is a lot of stock put into what [Chapleau's mayor] says. He has a lot of history with being a politician. He has a lot of background. (NSFC 3)

> In Chapleau, [the mayor] has been there for a long, long time. Our Mayor has only been in this position for two years roughly... so there's a learning curve in that. (Municipal 10)

Many (NSFC 1, 3; municipal 10) attributed this to the long experience of the Chapleau mayor with local politics relative to other officials and also that other Mayors had consciously limited themselves to filling their council positions on a part-time basis (NSFC 8). The consolidation of positional power as president and senior mayor served to reproduce power relations in the newly

forming NSFC, based on the location of staff and the head office in Chapleau. Indeed, when it was recognized that the hired consultants would soon be positioned to control the NRCAN funds, a sympathetic staff member and facilities were offered to establish the organization which also reinforced Chapleau as the lead town, whether unintentionally or by design.

Once a formal organization was established and backed with federal funding, municipal representatives took on more of a leadership role. Consultants and other 'advisors' were disengaged due to potential conflicts of interest and the perceived need to maintain complete local control over the organization. Certain pet project ideas were left to 'die off' (NSFC 3)—intentionally dropped altogether to remove any vestige of former consultant control or influence, and to distance rejected ideas from the 'new' organizational identity. This is an example of how positional power was exercised to limit and emphasize representation in the development of social framings.

7.5. Summary

This chapter analyzed the social framings collaboratively produced in a group of local representatives and their advisors—the Mayors' Group—that led to the development of a formal organization intended to promote community stability in Northern Ontario. Guided by the conceptual framework, the analysis illustrates how power relations and socio-cultural contexts mediate the double-loop learning processes through which framing and reframing occurs. In the above pages, I have illustrated how alternative problem and solution frames were developed and the role of power relations in advancing certain ideas over others in the creation of the NSFC. In particular, the analysis shows how different sources of agent-based power (i.e., authority, resources, relational and positional) were exercised by municipal actors, consultants, and later First Nations, which were central to shaping organizational identity as a basis for collective action.

Formation of a collaborative regional governance structure created capacity but also introduced a power imbalance among local communities (as perceived by some municipal actors) and tension between local and regional identities. There was conflict among local

political leaders, consultants, and staff over organizational identity and, in turn, problem and solution frames, which contributed to shifting a organizational vision and preferences for actions/outcomes. The early organizational phase of the NFSC, local leadership capacity, as well as entrenched support for conventional forestry perspectives among key NSFC players, constrained organizational support for and involvement in truly novel local control projects deemed essential in NSFC's Forest Communities Program proposal to the federal government. Based on a shared commitment to improving community relations and development in the region as a whole, local actors confronted a steep learning curve. Together NSFC participants made progress in developing a collaborative governance structure and capacity and economic development innovation.

Timing of controlled and uncontrollable political, economic and social events created a turbulent context for working and learning together. Unforeseen events and uncertain outcomes (e.g., municipal elections) also created opportunities for some local political actors (e.g., the Mayors, First Nations), while limiting those of others (consultants), as efforts progressed. Long-term leadership in Chapleau provided stability that assisted with the implementation of the Forest Communities Program amidst fluctuating political support and economic conditions. The loss of industry amplified the role of senior governments and funding agencies at the community level, as well as local political intervention. Specifically, federal and later provincial monies flowing through the NSFC and NSRCF shifted the dynamics of power among municipal leaders, First Nations, local enterprise, forest industry and consulting companies. Social framings of the forestry crisis and NSFC's related role were constantly being adjusted according to what actors were dominant at different times throughout the organizational development process. This highlights the importance of context to social framing processes and emphasizes the normative consideration that learning processes and outcomes serve certain interests and values.

The next and concluding chapter (8) provides a synthesis of the main research findings from Chapters 5, 6, and 7. It highlights the main conceptual, empirical and methodological contributions, reviews strengths and limitations of this research, makes recommendations for the NSFC and identifies future research needs and opportunities.

CHAPTER 8 – CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

8.1. Overview

In the opening chapters, I established that Canadian forest management and planning have gradually shifted towards increased collaboration. I argued that such changes warrant critical attention because the benefits of collaborative and learning-based approaches do not accrue automatically, nor are all interests served equitably. Identifying conceptual overlap among social learning, political ecology and collaboration research, I set out to explore the utility of frame analysis (Dale 1989; Rein and Schön 1994; Gray 2003; Forsyth 2003) for understanding evolving perspectives and outcomes of the ongoing forestry crisis in Northern Ontario, and the emergence of the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation. Accordingly, this research addresses the need for research that better accounts for how power relations affect learning in emerging collaborations (Sinclair and Diduck 2001; Keen and Mahanty 2006; Wildemeersch 2007; Armitage et al 2008), and thereby contributes to a more nuanced understanding of social learning processes and outcomes.

The main research findings and conclusions are discussed below, organized as a response to the core research questions presented in Chapter 1. A summary discussion leads up to each of the 14 conclusions. The main research contributions (conceptual, methodological and empirical), research strengths and limitations, 10 recommendations for practice, and future research opportunities are then presented.

8.2. Main Findings: Discussion and Conclusions

8.2.1. How do different actors frame the forestry crisis in the Northeast Superior Region?

The survey results and frame analysis established two main perspectives of the 'forestry crisis'. The first is based on conventional forest resource management in which companies hold the primary interest as policy agents in resource extraction and commodity export. The second perspective presents an alternative view which advocates increased municipal and First Nations control of forests to establish equity and provide stability in resource towns. Previous research (Salazar and Alper 1996; Beckley 1998; Baker and Kusel 2003; Donoghue and Sturtevant 2008) presents an analogous dichotomy which reflects the social transformation in North American

forest communities and hinges on different beliefs about how forests *should be* managed, including the range of values and interests to be considered, and the control and distribution of forest-derived benefits. I have also shown that each perspective offers a different set of solutions as a response to crisis and conflict, although power relations (discussed below) worked to reinforce long dominant social framings at both the regional (Chapter 6) and local scales (Chapter 7). These different sets of solutions are consistent with corporatist versus dependency models of forest politics found in previous situations of resource management conflict in Canada (Salazar and Alper 1996). However, my research presents new evidence from a new case study in Northern Ontario.

My research shows that the dominant discourse of conventional forest management has a long history (by Canadian standards) in Northern Ontario. Conventional forest management has played a formative role in shaping the patterns of resource and community development, forest governance arrangements, and identities of those living and working in Northeast Superior forests. Under the current management structure, a set of contrasting interest-based identity frames link 'dependent' forest resource towns, workers and First Nations to expert forestry professionals who manage Crown forests for increasingly large corporate entities and the provincial government (Chapter 6).

Confirming the observations of Donoghue and Sturtevant (2008), an entrenched community of interest, including both internal and external actors (e.g., investors, mill managers and workers, bush workers, and government regulators), has formed around a common goal and/or set of beliefs (i.e., timber extraction and scientific forestry). These interests have historically reproduced uneven social relations and overridden communities of place and collective place-based identities. Positive characterisations of locally-owned forest companies indicate support for extractive industries—and even trust and acceptance of a paternal relationship between residents and private companies—as long as ownership is perceived to be 'community minded', linked to other local businesses, and there is perceived recirculation of forest-derived benefits in nearby towns. Survey findings too indicate a clear preference for increased municipal control of forest resources (i.e., devolution from the provincial to municipal level) and benefits to local residents from area forests (see section 5.4.3).

Conclusion 1: In the Northeast Superior Region, social framings of forestry issues, as well as identities and local culture, are mediated by core-periphery dynamics.

In constructing the forestry crisis, dominant identity, diagnostic and prognostic frames were advanced early on as the basis for action (Tables 6.8; 6.13). The frame analysis in Chapter 6 showed that managers, residents and workers of Northeast Superior's resource dependent towns are accustomed to the regional boom and bust cycle of major primary industries. Many participants were also aware that global forces of economic and corporate restructuring in developed market economies are contributing to long-term rural change in primary industries and associated communities (Hayter 2000). Notably, the most recent downturn in the forest sector was not framed as a 'forestry crisis' until corporate interests became convinced that conditions had exceeded those of past sectoral downturns in both magnitude and duration. From the onset, the problem was framed by industry and the media based on economic challenges for forest companies. Conventional framings became the 'master narrative' (Escobar and Paulson 2005) against which all new ideas or alternate problem and solution perspectives were assessed.

Frame analysis of regional media showed that industry and government voices prevailed during the first several years (2001-2005) of the unfolding crisis. Local control perspectives were initially easily silenced by dominant views and the ensuing scramble of closures and job loss across the North. When labour and municipal leaders did speak out, community and labour issues were framed according to implications of the crisis for the industry first, rather than the socio-economic impacts on towns and residents. Interviews showed that shrinking profits, declining competitiveness, wood or 'fibre' supply challenges, political interference in the market, and rising operation costs had become common catchphrases even among dissenters.

Industry representatives in the media and interviews evoked interest-based identity frames to unify workers with companies, and, initially, forest workers, labour and municipal leaders backed the industry (sections 6.2.3, 6.2.4). A combination of economic factors contributed to a full-scale crisis, beginning with the softwood lumber dispute, rising energy costs, rising currency rates, and fibre supply challenges. Conventional problem frames externalized most of the blame onto provincial and federal governments characterised as 'indifferent' and 'slow to react'. Framing the problem environment as 'killer' and 'poisonous'

while identifying industry as suffering 'a slow death', 'riding out the storm' and 'surviving', served both to inspire collective action to save the 'victim' (while placing responsibility elsewhere), and set the stage to rationalize future actions (Benford and Snow 2000).

Conclusion 2: Social framings can remain stable over time (Elliot et al 2003: 413), reinforcing uneven social relations and normalizing recurring socio-economic difficulty.

Public controversy, resulting from corporate restructuring and the delayed response of the provincial government, generated a perception among dissenting groups that the existing industry and senior governments would at last fail the North. Several grassroots groups presented alternate framings of the forestry crisis based on different assumptions regarding the appropriate organization of actors, fuller potential of forest products, services and workers themselves (i.e., northern talent), and redistribution of benefit streams (Table 6.8; 6.13) (section 6.2.5). This is not to say that local control sponsors denied the many substantive challenges facing the existing industry; rather, they determined that fundamental change was required and reframed the problem to propose alternate solutions, rather than supporting industry ultimatums to government to save the failing status quo.

Previous research shows that disparate economic interests (e.g., amenity vs. extraction) can produce geographically uneven and contested framings of forest environs and rural development both between (e.g., Wolf and Klein 2007) and within forest communities in transition (e.g., Gill and Reed 1997). My research adds that, as a response to crisis, collaboration and double-loop learning among local actors can work to help rethink existing economic activities by reframing forest-community relations that structure forest use and control. In this case, productive hinterland forest landscapes need not necessarily become part of "consumptive landscapes" (Gill and Reed 1997). Transforming governance arrangements and reframing identities, problems and solutions (Pahl-Wostl 2009) can provide a way forward for "productive landscapes" that do not have a locational advantage (i.e., proximity to large urban markets) to remain productive but be more innovative. The move by Chapleau and later the NSFC to promote and implement large-scale blueberry plantations across the region is one example (Chapter 7). However, without a meaningful shift in the power dynamics, this transformation will be hampered. The case study shows that reframing forest-community relations and

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realization of meaningful change in forest governance must be driven internally to counter centralized and external control of resources and towns.

In the Northeast Superior Region, the initial emergence of the Mayors' Group (and other local control groups such as NOSCP and STRONG) created much needed space for open discussion among individuals from different backgrounds. Together, they identified and constructed a more complete view of their shared problems. This insight and understanding took forestry debates away from the usual topics (e.g., energy and transportation costs, licensing, fibre flows) associated with conventional power brokers, such as the provincial government and forest companies. This discussion was facilitated through the establishment of a regional governance forum (i.e., Mayors' Group) to bridge smaller hinterland centres.

Initially under the radar, the Mayors' Group and its consultants advocated contentious ideas about tenure reform and directing control away from major forest companies, and also to encourage these ideas as a way to promote regional development. Indeed, not all Mayors supported a local control view. Still, these early efforts to consider alternative ideas and arrangements were part of the overall regional pressure on the provincial government to review the Crown forest tenure system beginning in March 2009.

> *Conclusion 3: Catalyzed by societal crisis, informal regionally-based collaborative forums or 'shadow networks' (Gunderson 1999; Olsson et al 2006; Goldstein 2008) can act as incubators for alternative ideas and learning in response to the limitations of existing policies and governance arrangements.*

Survey and interview findings show that regional actors hold contrasting views regarding the current definition and principles of Sustainable Forest Management (section 5.4.4), as well as a tension between utilitarian and conservation-oriented views of the forest (section 6.3.1). Such differences present an opportunity for learning among regional actors to help create awareness for SFM and the views of others in order to clarify a context-specific common vision. The current focus on maintaining constant timber supplies for mills requires that forest conditions be held constant and reflects an outdated understanding and approach to managing forest ecosystems. This is not surprising given the history and enduring image of the region. However, a focus on forest and community health would provide a useful starting point for developing new

institutions based on Sustainable Forest Management principles to guide human interactions with forest ecosystems in Northern Ontario. First Nations can and should play an important role in this regard.

> *Conclusion 4: In the Northeast Superior Region, framings of forest and community sustainability remain preoccupied with maintaining current timber supplies for corporate employers, prioritizing economic values that undermine local control objectives.*

8.2.2. Do actors' frames change over time? How? Why?

Major forest industry leaders and lobbyists did not change their perspectives on the nature of the problems contributing to the 'forestry crisis'. Industry and government focussed on instrumental fixes (single-loop learning), emphasizing technical solutions for gaining efficiency in policy and company operations. This meant trying to reduce uncertainty for investment and removing barriers to competiveness in Ontario. The frame analysis in Chapter 6 showed that tenure reform was not preferred by existing license holders as it would increase uncertainty for them and not address immediate challenges to help maintain struggling companies.

In the Northeast Superior Region, actors outside of the forest policy network gained understanding of the crisis through their personal and work experience. This was true for municipal representatives, local enterprise, First Nations, forest workers and parks employees involved in advisory forums such as Local Citizen Committees, employed in the forest sector, or in the case of First Nations, involved in parallel processes with senior governments. Participants became generally aware of the buzzwords and catchphrases used by industry and government to summarize the wider 'forestry crisis' (e.g., 'perfect storm'; 'delivered wood costs', 'competitiveness'; 'poor markets') (Chapter 6 and 7). However, such processes did not provide effective opportunities for them to make substantive contributions to correct policies or plans, or to reflect on the nature of the problems and solutions, and so were limited in terms of promoting social learning (unlike other formal public involvement processes, see Hayward et al 2007, for example). The refusal of First Nations and labour groups to sign-off on the final report of the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness (2005) indicates that such venues were not able to address the views of all actors (section 6.2.4). The Mayors' Group, labour groups and

others lobbied government heavily to establish locally responsive forums to discuss perspectives and knowledge, before finally sponsoring their own sessions.

As problems and understanding evolved, Northeast Superior participants reflected that they did not think a forestry downturn could ever get so bad—indicating that the current crisis had exceeded local experience. Through collaboration, the Mayors' Group and NSFC participants developed a deeper appreciation for the complexity of the forest industry and policy environment (e.g., wood flows and the integration of facilities, forest products). Sharing first-hand experience also contributed understanding of the impacts on neighbouring towns and forests, and how, in turn, such impacts affected their own communities.

Local representatives also turned to professional consultants who provided critical expertise and outside perspectives on related problems. This encouraged the local leadership and business people to start looking differently at the forest and the role of municipalities and First Nations in forest resource planning and business. For some, this meant expanding the number of products and services to be extracted from forest ecosystems, while others sought transformation in forest governance.

> *Conclusion 5: Sponsored forums (e.g., LCC) can help individuals to develop general understanding of key issues (single-loop learning); however, separate regional forums (e.g., Mayors' Group and NSFC) with facilitation can help introduce 'new' perspectives to reconsider problems in specific contexts.*

Even with prolonged decline in the Northeast Superior Region causing mill closures, bankruptcies and outmigration, conventional forestry supporters with vested interests maintained that large-scale industrial forestry was the best way to develop forest resources. My analysis of documents and interviews illustrated that the colonial framing of the North as a 'resource storehouse', and forests as the 'economic engine', were integrated with strong identity and characterisation frames depicting northern communities and workers as resource producers (Chapters 6 and 7). Traditional resource dependence has encouraged towns to compete fiercely with one another for outside investment opportunities.

Participants described a significant reframing of identities from individual, competing towns, to a regionally-minded and cooperative network. Building understanding for their own

similarities and differences regarding common problems and opportunities to work together helped to build trust and capacity. This outcome is consistent with experiences in the collaboration and social learning literatures (e.g., Gray 1989, 2003; Schusler et al 2003). Mutual understanding of their interconnectedness encouraged thinking on a regional scale and coordinating action, whether for political lobbying or infrastructure development. Common place-based identity frames considered more responsive to 'northern' and local values took hold where interest-based identities no longer served local actors. Trust and commitment to the Mayors' Group and NSFC eventually produced a sense of selflessness among towns. A shared sense of pride also developed as achievements garnered outside recognition. However, potential for conflict remained where 'internal' challenges to existing enterprises and protectionism arose.

> *Conclusion 6: Commitment to place rather than interests can provide an entry point to develop trust and mutual understanding of each other and shared problems, and enable reframing of a common identity based on shared values and problems/opportunities.*

Cross-cultural collaboration within the NSFC also presented a new opportunity and challenge to reconcile lasting community divides. Both First Nations and non-Aboriginal participants stated that slow growing respect for First Nations rights and leadership had encouraged a positive rapport based on common problem identification and benefits of working together. Still, the lack of trust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities limited openness between collaborating representatives, a bureaucratic barrier previously noted to create suspicion and support "gatekeepers of information and power" (Critchley and Scott 2005: 153). As noted by several participants, a forum for direct interaction and open dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leadership is needed to help familiarize long-separated communities. Whether at the 'water cooler' or 'across the fence', informal personal interaction is important to developing understanding as a first step to relationship building. Whereas deep-seated mistrust institutionalizes conflict in formal organizational processes and structures, opportunities for periodic, informal personal interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are important to foster collaboration.

Throughout the crisis, negative characterisations of the provincial and federal governments did not change. Industry, labour, NGOs, municipalities and First Nations continued to blame the governments for their indifference, and slow and misdirected actions (Chapter 6).

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Non-industry actors perceived forest policy and management to be captured by industry; industry believed that large environmental lobby groups heavily influenced provincial decisions. Prominent reports on the state of the crisis commented that the forest industry as a whole was not supported by government and suggested moving the economic aspects of forestry into the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

As conditions worsened, government was continually blamed by actors from all sectors for being incompetent and/or unresponsive. At the same time, there was a general avoidance by industry of actually accepting its role in the problem, and municipalities and First Nations were trying for increased involvement. Most actors (including provincial representatives) framed the provincial government and OMNR as having the most power over forest resources (discussed below), and they believed it should be able to change or control conditions contributing to the crisis. However, this belief points to false assumptions underlying actors' characterisation and diagnostic frames—assumptions that overlook conventional power structures and resource dependency in the periphery. The problem was too narrowly defined and/or more complex than believed, and so could not actually be understood and solved by unilateral government action (or even government-industry action). Moreover, the provincial government *does not* have as much control over problem variables and context as people think, or at least it does not have the 'right' kind of power to fix this large-scale societal problem.

> *Conclusion 7: Negative characterisations and flawed assumptions about the nature of the problem and capabilities of other actors contributed to conflict rather than collaboration to inhibit learning.*

8.2.3. What forms/sources of power are present and how do they influence, if at all, the construction of shared meaning (frame convergence/divergence)?

8.2.3.1. Regional/Organizational Network

At the regional/organizational network scale, both the survey findings (section 5.4.3) and interviews with regional actors (section 6.3.3) confirmed perceptions that the provincial government, forest industry and First Nations were the most powerful actors with respect to the ability to cause change. However, the consolidation of agent-based power in industry (resource license rights, technical expertise and capital) was seen to overshadow other political actors. Non-industry actors also perceived that the positional power and expertise of provincial

government was used to support industry. Participants saw the relationships and disciplinary backgrounds of forestry professionals contributing to a strong common identity and relational/coalitional power based on shared interests and values (Gray 2003; Putnum and Wondolleck 2003) derived from common training and involvement in forest management. This in turn supported a scientific forest management system.

Conclusion 8: Relational power works to consolidate various forms of agent-based power in dominant actors rather than facilitating its distribution.

Although First Nations' authority was recognized by most stakeholder participants, this power was also seen to be undermined by First Nations' capacity limitations (i.e., resources and expertise). Because of this, First Nations were characterised as potential and/or future leaders (rather than actual) in land and resource management. Rather than being supported, the onus was on First Nations to demonstrate capacity for their 'potential' power to be realized. Uneven distribution of agent-based power, where one source of power 'activates' another, exemplifies a relationship of paternal consent and colonial conditions that gave rise to dominant social framings in the first place.

From a structural view of power, meanings surrounding the forestry crisis reflect uneven social relations that infuse governance arrangements and shape perceptions and actions affecting forests and forest communities. Forest knowledge and decision making is primarily based on social framings propagated by forestry experts—namely forest scientists, economists, policy makers and managers. Shared disciplinary training and professional status, together with a technically complex operating and policy environment, reinforce the role of the expert and created need for trained professionals and associations. It also created a need to have professional counterparts in supporting roles within the public, private and even civic components of the forest sector. This is not to deny the need for and contribution and knowledge of forestry professionals, but to highlight that they are part of a system of forest governance in Ontario that has often separated local interests and residents (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) from forest decision making and knowledge development. Conventional power relations worked to assert a certain view of the crisis and economic prognosis that bounded discussions of the

problems and solutions in economic terms with implications for the industry and dependent towns.

As less powerful groups, local control actors had to take the debate outside of conventional government-industry exchange to advance more inclusive framings of the crisis. A number of reports were based on independent research and staged public involvement sessions (e.g., CEP, NOSCP). The NSFC, among others, pressed for the development of NTFPs and development of value-added economies and education thought essential to rethinking the forest economy. Conventional industry players saw novel forest uses as minor products and profit streams that could be developed alongside existing commodities. However, from the local control perspective, the pairing of NTFPs with demands for increased Aboriginal and local control, and the integration of local and regional economic development, forest and energy resource management, and strategic planning indicates an attempt to actually reframe how governance arrangements should/could work to include local interests and forest values (Chapter 7). This reframing on the part of NSFC leadership indicates double-loop learning (Argyris and Schön 1978; Keen et al 2005).

> *Conclusion 9: Dominant social relations influenced the perceived range of reasonable or desirable options as dominant actors bounded the problem to serve conventional interests, which in turn constrained debate about solutions.*

Survey findings showed that many people want to elevate the power of and benefits to local residents, First Nations, and municipal governments in the Northeast Superior Region, while maintaining the dominant position of the provincial government. Local residents and local government experienced the most amount of change, being elevated to higher positions of power (+40%, +39%, respectively) and benefits (+49%, +38%, respectively) based on normative considerations. This is somewhat of a contradiction, given the enduring negative characterisations of senior governments. At the same time, environmental, tourism, outdoor recreation and the federal government were seen as special interest groups that should have less influence over and benefits from forestry. The level of perceived power was not considered proportionate to benefits received, suggesting that respondents recognized that individuals and groups with power over resources can choose to influence how benefits are distributed. Participants from all sectors also felt that broad collaboration was required to formulate better

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problem understanding and solutions. In general, there was a desire for strong public control (both at the municipal and provincial level) and leadership to improve forest governance.

While provincial and municipal interview participants and survey respondents called for fundamental change and some did offer specific practical and/or normative suggestions as to what could and/or should be changed, there is a limited awareness of other tenure regimes used around Ontario and in other regions. Survey and interview findings showed that no overall preferred model for tenure emerged, largely due to a lack of knowledge of and/or experience with other models (sections 5.4.2; 6.3.2). This is a key finding from a social learning perspective. It also confirms a barrier identified by previous research with local forestry organizations in British Columbia, where grassroots organizations aspiring to become more involved in forest management were hindered by a lack of vision and understanding for practical options among leadership at both the local and provincial levels (Bullock et al 2009). Given the lack of awareness about alternative tenure models among municipal and provincial leadership in the Northeast Superior Region, greater municipal and First Nations involvement requires detailed examination of how these groups should or could be engaged and what would be required (e.g., legislation, capacity building/enhancement) to implement such changes. Local officials want devolution of power over forest resources from the provincial to municipal level.

> *Conclusion 10: Public, civic and small industry actors in the Northeast Superior Region value public control of Crown forest resources at both the provincial and local level and want resource control devolved to local actors; however, leadership and residents require deeper understanding and a vision for implementation.*

Perceptions of powerful actors highlight the important interplay of phenomena across levels (e.g., municipal-provincial, local-regional) and different scales (spatial, jurisdictional) (Cash et al 2007). For example, those involved with provincial strategic policy juxtaposed 'big' outside environmental groups with industry, based on public support and 'noise making'. Conversely, at the local level of jurisdiction scale, traditionally marginalized actors (e.g., municipal, grassroots NGOs, tourism, workers and residents) cited OMNR's physical presence and administrative role as mediating daily life in forest communities (section 6.3.1). Within a hierarchical, top-down management structure, different actors had varying roles and power at different levels of jurisdictional scale. Depending on their involvement, actors described

different groups as powerful and with a visible impact on the forestry sector, community culture and economy as *they* saw it. While political persuasion influences one's stance on an issue, actors may think differently about the same issue, for example, "as an individual landowner directly affected by a decision" (Measham and Baker 2005: 95). Mismatches between relevant knowledge and decision making and of jurisdiction and problem effects remain an ongoing source of conflict. This is due in part to the challenge of bridging different scales and levels linking events and actors involved in the forestry crisis.

> *Conclusion 11: Framings of agent-based power are scale-dependent, which can cause powerful (and disempowered) actors operating at different levels of jurisdictional scale to be overlooked.*

8.2.3.2. Local/Organization

The relationships among the Mayors initially strengthened their voice, resources and expertise. As in the wider region, relational power helped to draw together other forms of agent- based power. This relationship facilitated single-loop learning, as the Mayors learned about shared problems and each other, and eventually began to reframe problems and solutions with consultant input.

The Mayors' Group had created a syndicate to lobby senior government based on a previously established shared set of interests and a common identity (i.e., mill towns). The early arrangement reinforced structural power of existing roles and identities, and the real concern that operating mills and dependent towns needed to be maintained. However, first-hand experience with the crisis and input from consultants built interest in changing forest governance systems. By reimagining the relationship of forest and towns, they were creating an alternate discourse in forest communities. The early discursive work of the Mayors and their consultants worked to overcome negative structural and top-down authoritative power that maintained the failing status quo. The purposeful consolidation of agent-based power can help to counterbalance power flowing through dominant social relations, but in turn introduces a new structure.

However, existing structural power also contributed to frame resistance among certain leaders who supported dominant interests in their communities (e.g., Chapleau). Other municipal leaders who had lost their mills were willing to reframe issues because their

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communities 'had nothing left to lose'—they were not upholding a set of social relations that maintained the status quo when it no longer served them. This is where positional power at the municipal level was also crucial to maintaining control of local political direction of the organization. For example, when consultant input was perceived to threaten the political reputations of the Mayors' as well as remaining mill operations in Chapleau, the Mayor with the most experience and authority was able to limit dissent. Control of the NSFC was retained by limiting the positional power of other local political leaders and consultants and positioning supportive employees.

Rollover of the Mayors also effectively erased organizational memory of process conflicts and cleared a path for NTFP pursuits in keeping with Chapleau's original proposal. This shaped the organization in favour of existing dependent power relations with industry and government and the lead town. And while unified political lobbying on common issues was a main advantage of their informal Mayoral association, and the majority of towns (4 of 6) had experienced the withdrawal of their major forestry employers, partner municipalities and Aboriginals did not receive Mayors' Group endorsement for ongoing plans and proposals to take over existing forest licences.

These findings are in keeping with the work of Dengler (2007), who refers to the role of 'super-agents' who have special authority as interpreters of reality in governance regimes. Super-agents occupy multiple knowledge spaces within a network (e.g., positions) and are seen by others to hold legitimate and inordinate knowledge of problems and potential solutions. Within multi-level governance regimes:

> Super-agents are even more powerful than in a traditional top-down decision making structure because their power is bolstered both through other actors recognizing their central role in facilitating the collaborative environmental governance regime, and also through politicians external to the arena accepting the super-agents as brokers of knowledge in policy-regime. (Dengler 2007: 451)

As in the case of Dengler (2007), my research found that certain super-agents (e.g., the mayor of Chapleau) provided critical leadership to facilitate and maintain control of the NSFC for the common good of the region; however, unlike in Dengler (2007) this super-agent did not support the devolution of power within the NSFC nor the broader resource governance regime.

Conclusion 12: Actors who possess unmatched positional and expertise power in collaborative arrangements and adhere to conventional norms can intentionally and unintentionally subvert reframing processes through limiting dissent, thereby controlling the organizational framings being advanced to guide action.

Agent-based power was important to First Nation actors asserting their position with respect to forest development and conservation in the region. The early withdrawal of First Nations' support for the NSFC proposal and legal authority to intervene emphasized the positional power of First Nations. However, these actions were perceived by the Mayors as demands or threats which created conflict with First Nations. This initially did not promote the benefits of relational power as it had with the Mayors' Group. Another barrier to learning together was the lack of capacity on both sides. However, creation of the Regional Chiefs Forum and resource support from federal government and other funding streams contributed greatly to enhanced participatory capacity. Still, the initial unwillingness of the Mayors to collaborate with First Nations due to perceived and real capacity and time limitations reflects colonial dependency characterisations (Saarinen 1992; Reed 1995) rather than working to build a common identity on empowerment as the basis for further reframing problems and solutions for the region.

Conclusion 13: The reframing of a common place-based identity between Aboriginals and municipalities as the basis for future action requires the willing distribution of agent-based power and meaningful recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

8.2.4. How does social learning—evidenced by the construction of shared meaning through the development of common frames—influence the way actors approach forest management problems related to policy, planning and practice?

Reframing of problems and solutions (i.e., double-loop learning) leads to different actions and outcomes based on different assumptions and values (Argyris and Schön 1978). Conventional industry supporters remained focussed on propping up the status quo and mainly lobbied for government protection while restructuring operations (Chapter 6). Industry justified its continued control based on its expertise and the technical complexity of management as well as contracted legal agreements. The focus on gaining efficiencies in policy and operations reflects

a preoccupation with single-loop learning. Conventional interests emphasized usual fixes throughout the crisis.

Conversely, as an extension of the Mayors' Group, very early efforts were made to reframe NSFC's organizational identity away from the hinterland to place-based and wider community identities. The Mayors recognized the complexity of the situation and drew on outside consultants to help them develop understanding for their interconnectedness and how the region functions as a system. This is indicative of double-loop learning (Keen et al 2005). Such actions and outcomes also support the assumed benefits of collaboration whereby different actors begin working together when problems exceed their individual capacity and understanding in order to share resources and ideas (Gray 1989). The Mayors' Group then made efforts to establish a formal regional forum in response to failings of provincial government and conventional top-down forest management. Reframing enabled the Mayors' Group to shift towards regional planning. Ensuing success encouraged ongoing and wider collaboration on other issues, including forestry initiatives such as the NSFC (Chapter 7).

However, as discussed above, a lack of agreement and dominant power relations combined to scale back interest in controversial alternatives such as community forestry and Aboriginal co-management. Urging provincial policy makers to make room for NTFPs through piecemeal provincial policy change and partnering with major licence holders falls short of the kinds of reforms the Mayors and NSFC espoused. And although the NSFC proposal, website and policy documents make frequent and widespread references to the need for meaningful community control of forests and change (e.g., "For northerners to control the forests northerners have to begin thinking about the forests"), this rhetoric has not been matched by actions.

For example, NSFC did not provide a formal response to major provincial announcements for tenure and administrative reform, or the spring 2010 announcement of the creation of Local Forest Management Corporations. With respect to tenure policy, there is a window open now and a need/demand for public input to provide new vision at the provincial policy level. NSFC appears hesitant to address fundamental policy issues central to economic and social development in its region and is remiss as a public, community-based agency.

Conclusion 14: NSFC espoused organizational frames are not fully matched by its current actions, which reflects capacity limitations, ongoing organizational development, and that other implicit frames are driving actions.

8.3. Research Contributions and Opportunities

8.3.1. Conceptual

This research contributes to a better understanding of how power relations affect the social framings that drive action in settings of resource and environmental crisis and conflict, thereby helping to address an identified need (Armitage et al 2008) related to the advance of social learning theory. It also furthers efforts to bridge framing and social learning theory (Dale 1989; Forsyth 2003, Bouwen and Taillieu 2004; Gray 2004; Tippet et al 2005; Pahl-Wostl et al 2007; Pahl-Wostl 2009). I also provide support for the supposition that social learning is a political process inherent in multiparty collaboration, whereby reconciliation of individual and group identities occurs alongside the negotiation of problem definitions and solutions (Bouwen and Taillieu 2004).

A primary contribution of my research is the development and refinement of a conceptual framework to guide analysis of power relations and learning in collaborative settings (Figure 8.1). Figure 8.1 presents a more coherent and straightforward version of the provisional framework employed at the outset of this research (Figure 3.2). I believe this iteration of the conceptual framework better represents the key items for focus, which are important to critical research on social learning, framing, and power relations in REM crisis settings.

Specifically, the conceptual framework focuses analysis on three interrelated components: the *problem domain*, which presents the main issue(s) to be addressed; the *collaborative forum or platform* where social learning occurs as a process involving diverse actors who deliberate and negotiate the meanings that emerge to guide actions; and, the *contextual influences* that differentiate site-specific social framings as well as experiences of problems and learning outcomes from those in other places. In these ways, I provide a more specified framework than previous work (e.g., Argyris and Schön 1978; Kim 1993) that accounts for specific sources and forms of power and their relationships to social framing, looped learning

modes, actions and outcomes. The framework expands our view of social learning as a process involving actors and influences in wider society and across different scales and levels, rather than a bounded autonomous process that can be tweaked through prescribed interventions to produce certain desired outcomes.

Figure 8.1. Revised Conceptual Framework for Research on Power Relations and Social Learning
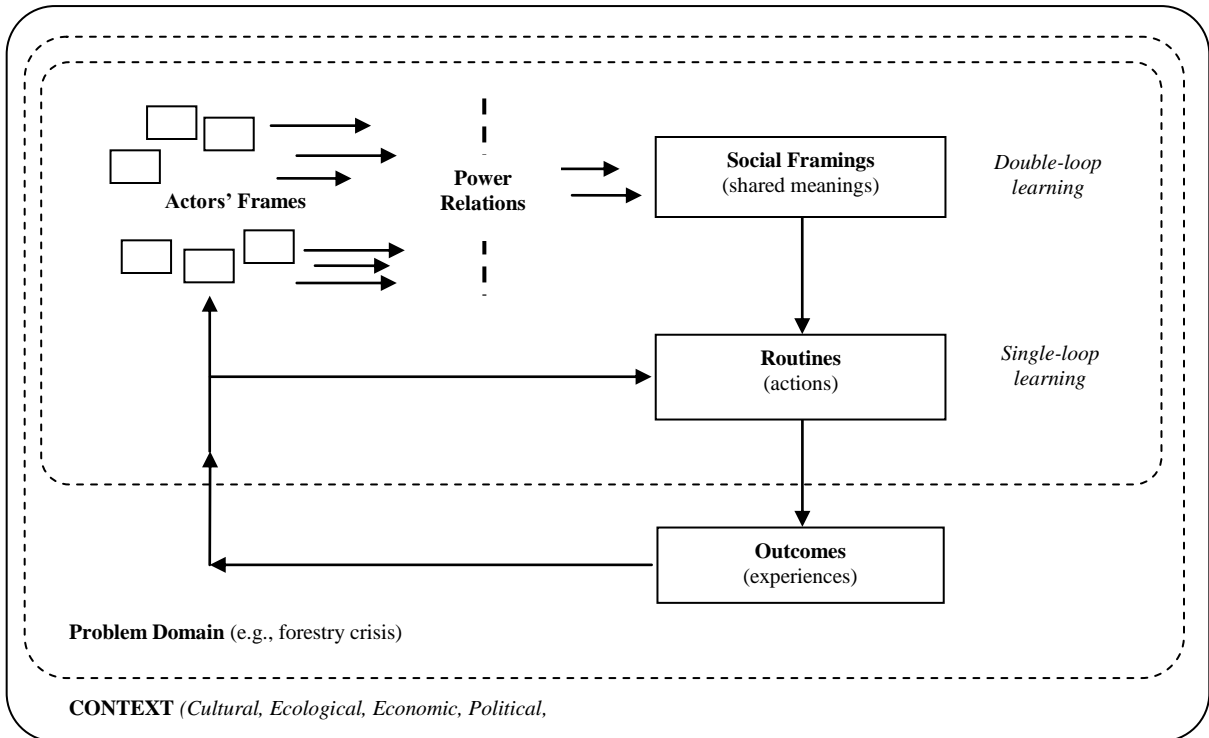
The framework is transferrable in that it can be applied to different social organizational contexts and sectors in order to understand the various forms and sources of power at work in collaborative settings. It was also helpful in guiding frame analysis of perspectives at two levels of social organization or social units of learning (Diduck 2010)—both the organizational network (e.g., policy community) and organizational levels of scale—demonstrating its ability to accommodate for different levels of network and jurisdictional scale (see Cash et al 2007).

My research highlights the importance of systematic frame analysis in social organizations (Kim 1993; Gray 2003), particularly where resource management processes are

characterized by uncertainty and conflict. Specifically, the research contributes to understanding of how framing and reframing influences the course of emerging collaborations from antecedent conditions of under-organization to implementation. Exploring different frames and making them explicit is critical to fostering social learning and effective participation in resource and environmental management (Pahl-Wostl and Hare 2004). Exploring organizational frames through the incorporation of political ecology concepts to assess power relations in a Canadian hinterland setting also contributes to understanding First World (critical) political ecologies (McCarthy 2002).

8.3.2. Empirical

Through this research, I document regional and local perspectives surrounding the forestry crisis and augment research on forest governance concerning forestry towns and Aboriginals in Northern Ontario. This research addresses a gap in the literature at a pivotal time of provincial policy and administrative reform, and supports the search for alternative tenure models to reinvigorate Ontario's forest economy and communities. Documented findings will help groups from various sectors to better understand the perspectives and actions of others, as well as their own, in the context of the forestry crisis debate. For example, NSFC representatives who reviewed and provided feedback on a previous draft of this dissertation (June 2010) cited this as a contribution. The interpretations presented here serve as the basis for further reflection and discussion of current forestry challenges.

This research also documents the successes and challenges experienced in the formation of the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation as part of the Canadian Model Forest Network. As such, it supplements NSFC organizational memory and provides information to support organizational and program development for NSFC, NSRCF and the Forest Communities Program. Survey findings offer baseline data to decision makers within NSFC, NRCAN and OMNDMF regarding regional perceptions of the Crown forest tenure system and publicly preferred actions (Bullock 2009). Preliminary findings have also been disseminated through conference presentations (Virginia Tech Symposium of Resilience 2008; CAG 2010) and peer-reviewed publications (Bullock, Armitage and Mitchell in review).

This research also contributes an in-depth single case study for future comparison with case studies on Forest Community Program sites, and/or studies in local and regional organizational development, collaboration and social learning. I established a university-community research relationship with a new Forest Communities Program/Model Forest site to encourage relevant research and knowledge transfer. Completion of this project provides the first step in the longitudinal analysis of perspectives within the NSFC and regional forestry crisis, serving to address the need for longitudinal research on social framings in the field of organizational social learning (e.g., Kim 1993; Tippet et al 2005).

8.3.3. Methodological Contributions

My research demonstrates one way frame analysis can be used to interpret underlying assumptions and values guiding the actions of political actors. I also tested the utility of a mixed methods approach to understanding evolving perspectives and various positions on a societal problem. This approach was effective for developing a rich dataset, providing different angles on similar variables. Moreover, adapting Gray's (2003) typology of frames helped me to collect and review a very large data set, and to then focus on a relevant subset.

I also demonstrate the utility of an embedded case study analysis for analyzing nested processes of social organization related to the same problem and regional context. In particular, by linking data across the local and regional levels of forest governance, my analysis provides a robust perspective. This was further supported by the comparison of a variety of data sources and forms. Following an inductive and community-based approach, this research provides a research process model to assist the development of future case study research with community organizations.

This doctoral research established the foundation for a longitudinal study of social learning in an emerging organization and in a setting adapting to changes resulting from crisis conditions. Future research based on the same conceptual framework, question format, and where possible, the same participants, provides an opportunity for consistent assessment of organizational and contextual changes over the long term.

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8.4. Research Reflections: Strengths and Limitations

Given the local impacts of the crisis, and in some instances deep-rooted personal histories between and among different individuals and groups, some participants chose to discuss 'messy' personal conflicts and other hostilities of local politics. Other participants consciously stated their personal perceptions politely or mildly, framing their characterisations of others, problems, solutions and events in a way that made their public statements sound less venomous. With this in mind, a challenge is to interpret local stories and how power relations and the dynamics of exchange evolved, and how this in turn shaped dominant social framings and actions, without having the analysis descend into destructive 'he said-she said' diatribes. From the point of view of the analysis, most participants appeared sincerely concerned for the future of the region and of their neighbours, although different views and disputes often emerged about preferred actions and outcomes.

While this research examines a broad range of actors and their perspectives, it does not specifically attend to cross-cultural considerations in social learning forums (see Davidson-Hunt 2006). As such it does not fully address Aboriginal learning styles and knowledge systems. Aboriginals' cultural differences regarding community values and framings of forest-human relationships were acknowledged by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants during interviews. However, conversation with Aboriginal representatives remained oriented to matters of forest management, economic development and community planning activities on which they were active and most had a Western education (high school plus university or college). I acknowledge that to go beyond this level of Aboriginal engagement would require a cross-cultural framework for social learning research, ideally developed *with* the potential Aboriginal partners.

I encountered several barriers in the field that offer lessons for mixed methods case study research. Reporting back to partner organizations and getting feedback on research design and findings was difficult at times due to schedules and turnaround time. However, regular communication with the NSFC and NORDIK Institute provided helpful input for the research design as well as logistical considerations for trip planning. For example, it was brought to my attention early in the research process that French translation for surveys and interviews might be

helpful. Most participants for interviews and surveys spoke English, given they were representatives of private-public-civic organizations. Having completed the research, translation for French, Cree and Ojibway would have been ideal and will be considered for future publications where appropriate.

It is also possible that illiteracy reduced participation, especially for the survey. Several municipal representatives referred to high illiteracy rates within the region (i.e., about 50 per cent of males between 40 and 55 are illiterate). Although I was unable to verify this 'regional fact', that some people may not read and/or write requires consideration in data collection instruments. This emphasizes the importance of understanding the socio-economic background of participants beforehand to inform research design.

The best strategy for initial contact with some participants was through face-to-face or phone correspondence. Busy schedules and priorities can make even the most willing and supportive participants impossible to engage. Most people will 'make time now' if you are in town and keep a flexible schedule. This said it was also costly to move back and forth between towns within the Northeast Superior Region during the 2008 oil shortage when gas reached $1.50 per litre in Northern Ontario.

Some cultural or community barriers to entry were also encountered. The research was conducted under the auspices of the University of Waterloo with ties to the NORDIK Institute in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario as well as the NSFC. It turned out that some key people were deliberately avoiding me because of these affiliations (i.e., NSFC) due to previous histories and perceptions of which I was unaware. There was also very low awareness for the NSFC and myself, reflecting the timing of my research work in relation to the start of the NSFC, which contributed to suspicion and indifference. Being an outsider presented a challenge at times. For example, one survey participant later stated he discarded the mailed copy because he did not know who I was; some interview participants were also sceptical of my affiliation with a 'southern' university. At the same time, I acknowledge having some insider knowledge that was likely useful in gaining entry to the research site. Living in this region for five years (and travelling, recreating, working and researching here for close to 18 years) afforded valuable lessons about appropriate appearance and language.

A limitation of the survey design was the challenge of developing and piloting the survey instrument. Both time constraints and challenges of working with a purposive and small sample size negated optimal piloting opportunities which may have improved response rates and eased analysis. Moreover, the survey could have been better timed as it was mailed at the end of the moose and deer hunting season, right before Christmas holidays. Evidently, there were also different preferences for survey format (e.g., paper, electronic, telephone survey). Nevertheless, a combination of electronic and paper formats (mixed-mode after Creswell 2003) was effective to reach people with different technologies and time limitations. The survey also extended the data set, providing relevant data on my central research themes, but in different formats.

This research was intended to be the first step in a long-term study of NSFC's organizational development and social learning. Document review was crucial to develop understanding of the case history, and conducting two sets of interviews one year apart was helpful to follow-up on potential changes. However, given the short duration in between interviews, some participants had little to share in the form of new perspectives. This result shows the importance of long-term repetitive inquiry to detect incremental slow change that might seem imperceptible in contrast to sudden numerous and big changes.

An inductive case study approach enabled me to build a robust dataset, which helped to increase triangulation as well as the breadth of understanding generated through research participation. In addition to the wealth of interview and document data, attending and observing regional workshops and meetings was important to grounding observation from conversations and reports in the actual context of day-to-day events and debate. This also provided an opportunity to observe how participants interacted with one another in public forums relevant to the research. Moreover, presenting aspects of my research at conferences (Virginia Tech Symposium on Resilience, Fall 2008) during the research process provided valuable feedback to inform the ongoing research and conceptual framework.

8.5. Recommendations

The final section offers recommendations for the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation and NRCAN's Forest Communities Program. They are consistent with the NSFC

mission to promote education and ongoing learning, advocacy and influence public policy related to forest resource and community development in Northern Ontario. These suggestions may also be instructive for existing and emerging collaborative organizations. In keeping with the purpose of this research, I focus on aspects of organizational governance and practice that would help to address conditions affecting power relations and social learning.

Recommendation 1: Organize accessible regional public forums to increase public engagement with and support for the NSFC and NSRCF.

The NSFC and NSRCF together should organize context and culturally appropriate public workshops and/or online discussion forums to help engage regional residents and officials in further discussion and learning while simultaneously promoting awareness about the organizations. NSFC representatives should also continue to participate in events organized by other groups. These actions will help make the NSFC more visible. In keeping with efforts to make forest governance more inclusive and open, assessing the perspectives of youth, elderly, women, Aboriginal residents and other groups typically affected by—but less represented in— forest development matters is warranted.

Recommendation 2: Promote open access to organizational information to improve transparency and elevate public awareness of NSFC decision making.

As a publicly funded organization, the NSFC should continue to support the dissemination of relevant information on northern communities and forests. This should go beyond being a clearinghouse for NTFP information resources to include open access to organizational information, namely meeting minutes, agendas, and discussion materials, and where appropriate, government correspondence. This would make NSFC decision making processes and rationale explicit, thereby improving transparency and awareness. Such information could be made available through the NSFC website.

Recommendation 3: Create opportunities for public review of and input to NSFC strategic plans.

The preferences and attitudes of forest groups throughout the region are important to NSFC decision makers and staff as they plan and pursue projects to promote effective community participation in forest management and forest-related economic development.

Provided NSFC continues past its current federal funding period, the organization should create opportunities in each of the member communities for the public to reflect on and provide substantive input to the 2012-2017 strategic plan. Claims to representation can be further substantiated by incorporation of public perspectives to guide the organization.

Recommendation 4: Support partnerships with public-private-civic partners for tenure innovation.

Consideration of community perceptions regarding how tenure institutions shape interactions with area forests is especially important at a time when major provincial policy and administrative shifts are taking place that will affect how public forests are managed across Ontario. The NSFC should continue to work with Aboriginal, government, industry and other relevant partners to explore options for increasing access for new entrants to wood fibre and NTFPs. This should involve developing new models of tenure designed for use in the Northeast Superior Region, and could be based on partnerships with existing private interests and/or new opportunities provided by the reallocation of existing public resources to new entrants. A continued focus on small-scale NTFP ventures is appropriate to supplement existing large-scale timber manufacturing. It is also recommended that the NSFCC endorse the current plans and projects of its partner towns and Aboriginals (i.e., mill buy-outs and co-management) to fully recognize the desires of the entire region. Endorsing ongoing projects is also more efficient than building new ones from the ground up.

Recommendation 5: Commission research on and promote public understanding of current experience with other models of participatory governance and sustainability as a guide for action.

Collaboration, local involvement and diversity are central themes expressed by regional forest groups that must be kept in mind when considering adaptations of and/or alternatives to conventional industry models. However, enhancing the participatory capacity for forest management by northern communities and a broad range of forest groups requires further understanding of tenure options and related forest management concepts (i.e., SFM), and their strengths and weaknesses, in order to develop effective institutional arrangements. Some region-specific reports already provide systematic analyses of practical tenure options (e.g., OMNR 1994) but require updating. A synthesis report on current tenure and organizational models

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could be developed and made available through the NSFC website as an educational tool. NSFC could pilot NTFP project(s) based on one or more of the previously outlined alternatives to create new opportunities and assess the advantages and disadvantages of certain models as a 'test'. Information resulting from these efforts would also be a valuable contribution to the Model Forest Network.

Recommendation 6: Participate in dialogue surrounding current provincial initiatives for tenure and administrative reform.

NSFC advocates increased local control and acknowledges that developing supportive tenure arrangements is essential to facilitate economic and social development. Ongoing provincial efforts to reform the Crown tenure and pricing system represent a crucial window of opportunity for forest groups to inform provincial strategic policy development. As a purported advocate of regional forest-based development, NSFC should use this opportunity to assert its perspectives with OMNR regarding how the new system could better support NTFPs and also clarify the organization's position with respect to public forest use and control. Active involvement in developing forest governance arrangements is inextricably linked to forest-based social and economic development and must be treated as such.

Recommendation 7: Fully recognize Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and support the successful resolution of Aboriginal treaty settlement negotiations.

As an organization consisting of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners, NSFC must in principle respect Aboriginal Treaty Rights. Expanding the board to include Aboriginal representation and supporting capacity-building efforts are positive developments. The organization must also support the fair settlement of treaty negotiations in order to promote democratic forest governance and development. Mitigating social conflict and capacity building will promote development in the region.

Recommendation 8: Consider restructuring the organizational arrangement to expand representation on the board.

The NSFC began with the Mayors' Group and the addition of Aboriginal representation to the voting board membership was a key step towards collaboration. Participating towns are served by municipal representation on the board. The NSFC should consider adding up to three

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at-large public members to represent regional interests (NTFP enterprise, education, parks, fish and wildlife, community health). Ex-officio board member status for OMNR and OMNDMF also requires consideration, given provincial jurisdiction and roles in forest management planning.

Recommendation 9: Experiment with the creation of a decentralized organizational model.

Early moves to restructure the NSFC organization were essential to ensure democratic process (e.g., ensure cross-representation on all committees; control by board). There are additional options to increase equity while maximizing the use and development of existing capacity in the region. While it is logistically easier to have a central office, NSFC should follow the inspiration of its Aboriginal partners and experiment with a decentralized approach to program development. Different partner communities could lead on programmatic themes by hosting one of various organizational committees. For example, given its membership, Chapleau is the clear lead on the NTFP Technical Team. Perhaps White River and Pic Mobert would be appropriate hosts for the Bioenergy and Wood Technical Team, given existing ties to White River Forest Products. These partner communities will be developing their expertise in cogeneration, wood pellet and lumber production and will gain knowledge and encounter lessons of value that could inform NSFC projects and decision making. Decentralization would also establish a physical presence in partner communities and draw local leadership and capacity from whole region, thereby improving representation. This action would also work to support the ongoing work to build the organizational network with previously identified regional interests (e.g., Pukaskwa National Park).

Recommendation 10: Establish explicit rationale for and clearly identify the geographical extent and boundaries for the organization.

NSFC should define and adopt its own territorial boundaries based on explicit rationale. The Strategic Plan refers to several treaty, ecological and political-administrative boundaries that overlap within the region, but concludes NSFC "boundaries and area are not well defined" (NSFC 2007-2012: 7). NSFC's current boundaries appear to be based on previously existing SFLs, which are of little relevance to a multi-community entity focussed on alternative forest

uses and regional development. Using conventional boundaries also legitimizes existing company and OMNR political boundaries placed on the forest ecosystem, which relate more to the location of mills, wood supply and government offices. Establishing clear geographical boundaries for the organization can improve local awareness and support (Bullock 2006).

Recognizing that economic and social conditions must be considered alongside ecological concerns, NSFCs territorial land base should reflect the *new* regional identity and include Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal concerns. As such it would be appropriate for boundary identification to be guided by ecosystem-based planning principles. Public involvement in boundary setting would be an interesting and useful activity to undertake as part of the recommended community workshops. This would help to instill a sense of ownership and place-based identity for area residents and create support for the NSFC.

8.6. Future Opportunities and Research Questions

Completion of this phase of my research presents a number of future opportunities and research questions to be pursued. An obvious starting point is whether residents and organizations in the Northeast Superior Region want to participate in community-university research and, if so, what sorts of research questions they think need to be addressed.

With respect to my social learning research, three additional needs arise. First, there is a need to better understand Aboriginal perspectives of the forestry crisis. This would require interest and consent from Aboriginal partners and relationship building to facilitate the development of cross-cultural social learning forums and research, in order to fully address Aboriginal learning styles and knowledge systems.

Second, challenges with illiteracy and avenues for resident involvement in forest governance indicate a need to assess the potential role and limitations of new and existing learning forums within the Northeast Superior Region. There is an opportunity to improve learning platforms in support of broad public involvement.

Third, the NSFC is still at an early stage of development and is project/committee focussed. With the approach of NSFC's first 5-year evaluation there is an opportunity to assess learning at the action group level to determine the efficacy of learning processes within the organization. This would also provide further information that would be helpful for organizational evaluation.

Future research questions should also focus on the ecological outcomes of implementing preferred solutions (e.g., political ecology of blueberry production in the Northeast Superior Region). This would support calls by First Nations for additional ecological knowledge on ecosystem state and function within the Northeast Superior Region to inform resource and land use management and planning. Provincial announcements to revamp the provincial tenure system and establish local management authority corporations will open up additional possibilities.

As indicated in Chapter 6, during May and June of 2010 the provincial government organized seven public meetings to discuss the proposed tenure and pricing framework. It would be useful to examine the effectiveness of these sessions in terms of implications for meaningful public participation, implementation of public input into forest policy, the short-term outcomes of new policies as well as their role in the shifting course of the overall debate surrounding Ontario's Crown tenure system. From a social learning perspective, meeting participants could be interviewed to determine what was learned and whether meeting forums facilitated democratic debate and learning within the region.

The centrality of place-based identities in social learning processes and as the basis for local action were important themes that emerged quite late in the research process. While place-relevant literatures and related issues could not be treated adequately within the scope of my doctoral research, they are deserving of further attention. Specifically, what are the links between place-based thinking and local and regional political (re)organization/development in a northern forestry context? This is an important question considering current policy changes and the potential impact of climate change and shifting commodity markets for boreal Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

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Finally, given the scope and nature of the qualitative data collected (i.e., open ended interviews, direct observation of public events) opportunity exists for other lenses to be applied to the same dataset. In particular, much of the data collected through direct observation remains unanalyzed, providing a future opportunity.

8.7. Conclusion

This chapter highlighted and discussed my main research findings. Fourteen conclusions were discussed to link back to the core research questions. I then linked the discussion to my main conceptual, empirical and methodological research contributions. These include the documentation and analysis of power relations and social framings of the forestry crisis in the Northeast Superior Region, in Northern Ontario, Canada, as well as the important events that were instrumental in the emergence of informal regional governance and the NSFC. I also presented a refined conceptual framework, which draws together theoretical perspectives from the collaboration, political ecology, social learning and framing literatures, as well as insights from my doctoral research, to provide a heuristic for analysis that may be adapted to other settings. Reflections from the research experience document some of the challenges experienced in the field and offer some practical suggestions for mixed-method researchers and future research with the NSFC, the Northeast Superior Region, as well as community-based research sites in general. I outlined ten research-supported recommendations for the NSFC and FCP staff at NRCAN to consider, which offer practical suggestions for areas of organizational and program/policy development. Finally, emerging questions were identified to provide re-entry points for future research that would be helpful in advancing our understanding of how social actors learn through crisis.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Pool of interview questions addressing core research questions

1. How do different stakeholders frame the forestry problem?

a. What is your training background, experience, position and affiliation? (identity)

b. How long have you been involved (in forest management or NSFC specifically) and what is your role? (identity)

c. Who else is involved? (characterisation)

d. Please define the current forestry problem and main issues in the NSFC? (diagnostic, characterisation)

e. What do you consider to be the solution(s)? What should/can be done? (prognostic)

f. Who do you think should be in charge of making the decisions to overcome the stated forestry problems? (social control)

g. How should the forests be managed in Northern Ontario? (nature, general)

2. How do stakeholders' frames change/not change overtime? Why?

a. Have your perspectives changed over time since you first became involved (in forest management or NSFC specifically)? Why?

> -has your view of the problem and main issues changed and if so how?
> -have certain solutions become more appealing overtime? Why?
> -how would you describe your relationships with other stakeholders now?
> -how has your understanding of others changed?

b. What has contributed to you changing/not changing your mind?
> - Were there specific events that contributed to these changes (e.g., interactions with other individuals and organizations; meetings; conferences; landmark decisions; surprises; external changes)?

c. Have the power dynamics among forest stakeholders changed overtime? If so how?

3. What forms of power are present and how does this influence, if at all, the construction of shared meaning (frame convergence/divergence)?

a. What individuals and organizations have the most/least influence/power? Why? (power)

b. What makes the actors you describe powerful?

c. Whose perspectives are given the most/least credence? Why? (power)

d. How do the actors you describe influence stakeholder interactions and forest management processes in the NSFC? Can you please provide specific examples?

e. Can you think of any individuals or groups who should be involved in forest management in the NSFC but are not? Why are they not involved?

4. How does social learning (i.e., what has been learned in terms of constructing "shared meaning" through developing common frames) influence the way stakeholders approach forest management policy, planning and practice?

a. What has been learned about the identified forestry problem and main issues?

b. Has your understanding of the problem changed through interactions with other stakeholders? -How and why?

c. Has what you or your organization learned caused you to approach forest management issues differently?

5. General

Is there anything else you want to add regarding forest management in Northern Ontario or any other issues?

Appendix B. Information Letter and Verbal Consent

INFORMATION LETTER AND VERBAL CONSENT

(to be provided potential participants for review before the interview)

Research Project: SOCIAL LEARNING AS A FORMATIVE PROCESS IN COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT

I am conducting research as part of my PhD in the Department of Geography and Environmental Management at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Professors Bruce Mitchell and Derek Armitage. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

This study seeks to understand how learning occurs and what has been learned among different forest stakeholders in the Northeast Superior Forest Community with regard to Northern Ontario's current forestry crisis. Specifically, this study will examine how power relations influence the development of understanding among public-private-civic groups. One way to study how groups of people learn together is to examine how different peoples' perspectives change overtime in relation to others' and to key events. To explore this, adults who have been involved in forest management and who have been affected by key issues facing the region will be interviewed as part of a two phase study consisting of two rounds of interviews (about 1 hour each time), to be conducted about one year apart where possible.

This study focuses on learning and, therefore, change in forest stakeholders' perspectives in Northern Ontario, Canada. When faced with large-scale crises, individuals and organizations often respond by collaborating to share their understanding and resources towards the development of solutions to common problems. It is important to understand how stakeholders with different levels of influence contribute to such processes, solutions, and forest policy and management outcomes. Therefore, I would like to include you/your organization as one of several stakeholders to be involved in my study. I believe you are well-suited to speak to various forest-related issues affecting your community/organization.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Interviews will be conducted in a mutually agreed upon location. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by advising the researcher. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded to facilitate accurate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis. All information you provide is considered confidential. You will be asked to answer questions about themes relevant to forest management in Northeast Superior Forest Community, namely, your involvement in forest management and perspectives on the forestry crisis; your perspectives on relationships among various participants in forest management; and, what has been learned regarding the forestry crisis and resultant changes to policy and practice. It will be important to identify stakeholder groups to distinguish their evolving perspectives and enhance the research, however, individual names and specific position titles will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study unless you indicate that you would like to be identified to receive credit for your contribution. Should you express additional concern to the researcher that indentifying your stakeholder affiliation will make it possible for others to identify your remarks and identity, comments will not be

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attributed by stakeholder affiliation. Anonymous quotations may be used in the resultant thesis, publications, and/or presentations. A copy of the report will be made available to you upon request by contacting the student investigator by email and telephone (listed below). Only researchers associated with this project will have access to the data. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

Anticipated academic benefits include an enhanced understanding of how organizations learn and of the role(s) for local-level, collaborative forest management organizations in developing resilient communities, given their mandates and operational constraints. Anticipated potential benefits to participants include: reflecting on and taking pride in management strengths; identifying weaknesses and how they can be addressed; and, increasing mutual understanding of other people and organizations, their roles, and key issues related to forest management.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, **please contact me at 519.954.3833 or 518-888-4567 ext. 38176 or by email at rclbullo@envmail.uwaterloo.ca. You can also contact one of my supervisors: Professor Bruce Mitchell, 519-888-4567 ext. 33087 or email: mitchell@admmail.uwaterloo.ca; or Derek Armitage, 519-884-0710 ext. 2653 or email: darmitag@wlu.ca. Should you wish to participate in this research project please contact me via email, telephone, or surface mail, to the address indicated above, at your convenience.**

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. **If you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes of this office at 519-888-4567 Ext. 36005.**

Thank you,

Ryan Bullock

PARTICIPANT VERBAL CONSENT

I have received a copy of this form. I have read and understand the above information. I have had a chance to ask any questions I have about this research. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I can withdraw at any time without penalty by advising the researcher. Verbal consent has been obtained.

Do you agree to audio recording of the interview? Do you agree to the use of anonymous quotations in the thesis and any publications resulting from the research?

Appendix C. Mail Survey

A Survey of Perceptions of the Ontario Crown Forest Tenure System in Northeast Superior Forest Community

This survey is meant to gather information from a wide range of forest stakeholders in the Northeast Superior Forest Community (including Chapleau, Dubreuilville, Hornpayne, Manitouwadge, Wawa, and White River) based on their perceptions of the Ontario Crown forest tenure system and related issues. The confidential information you provide will be used by the Northeast Superior Forest Community Corporation to support project planning and for an academic research project on social learning in the Northeast Superior Forest Community, which is being conducted by Ryan Bullock, a PhD candidate with the Department of Geography and Environmental Management at the University of Waterloo. By better understanding the diverse perspectives among forest stakeholders we can help address the current forestry crisis in Northern Ontario in support of sustainable communities, economies, and forests.

The survey is brief and your participation is voluntary and anonymous. Only a summary of everyone's answers and anonymous quotations will be used in public reports. You may omit any question(s) you prefer not to answer. Please return the completed questionnaire to the survey drop box OR return it by mail in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided by January 1, 2009.

We thank you in advance for taking the time to share your views and experience. If you have any questions about the survey please feel free to contact:

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This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. Should you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes in the Office of Research Ethics at 519-888-4567 Ext. 36005.

Questions:

1) Please indicate your level of understanding regarding Ontario's Crown forest tenure system:

Very good / Good   / Fair / Poor /   Very poor

2) Please list what you think are the main STRENGTHS (up to 5) of the existing Crown forest tenure system in Ontario?

Main STRENGTHS of tenure system with 1 being the strongest
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

3) Please list what you think are the main WEAKNESSES (up to 5) of the existing Crown forest tenure system in Ontario?

Main WEAKNESSES of tenure system with 1 being the weakest
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

4) From your perspective, are certain forest-related activities/opportunities currently supported or enhanced by the existing Crown forest tenure system in Ontario? *(Please describe below)*

5) From your perspective, are certain forest-related activities/opportunities currently NOT supported or constrained by the existing Crown forest tenure system in Ontario? *(Please describe below)*

6) With regard to the activities/opportunities you described in questions 4 and 5, do you think anything can be done to improve the Crown forest tenure system in Ontario?

Yes____   ***If YES,*** **please describe SPECIFIC EXAMPLES of what you think would be useful changes in the space below.**

NO____   ***If NO, please state why not.***

7) In your own words, what do you think sustainable forest management is?

8) Given the Ontario Government's commitment to sustainable forest management, please list the characteristics (up to 5) that you think are important to a forest tenure system for sustainable communities, economies, and ecosystems in your region?

Important characteristics of forest tenure system with 1 being the most important
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

9) In general, are you aware of any other model(s) or forms of forest tenure that you think might be useful in Ontario to improve the existing Crown forest tenure system?

YES_____   **If yes, please briefly describe other tenure model(s) and how they would work in the space below.**

NO_____

10) Are you aware of the current tenure reforms that are underway to create co-operative sustainable forest licences (SFLs)?

YES_____   **If yes, what do you think are the major strengths AND weaknesses of co-operative SFLs?**

NO_____   **(Skip to Question 10)**

10) Please rank (with 1 being the highest) the following groups according to which ones you think a) HAVE the most power and b) SHOULD HAVE the most power over public forest resources in the Northeast Superior Forest Community region:

Groups	a) HAVE most power (1 = highest)	b) SHOULD HAVE most power (1 = highest)
Local government		
Provincial government/MNR		
Federal government		
First Nations		
Environmental/conservation groups		
Forest industry		
Outdoor recreational groups		
Local residents		
Tourism industry		
Other (please list)		

11) Please rank (1 being the highest) the following stakeholder groups according to which ones you think a) ACTUALLY benefit the most and b) SHOULD benefit the most from public forest resources in the Northeast Superior Forest Community region:

Groups	a) ACTUALLY benefit most (1 = highest)	b) SHOULD benefit most (1 = highest)
Local government		
Provincial government/MNR		
Federal government		
First Nations		
Environmental/conservation groups		
Forest industry		
Outdoor recreational groups		
Local residents		
Tourism industry		
Other (please list)		

12) Given Ontario's commitment to sustainable forest management, list the forest values (up to 5) you think should be emphasized in forest policy, planning, and practice to promote sustainable communities, economies, and ecosystems in your region?

List forest values important for sustainability with 1 being the most important
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

14) Do you have any other comments you wish to share regarding Crown forest tenure in Ontario? (Please use back of page if necessary)

15) Please provide us with your individual information:

a) With regard to forest resources, which group do you represent? *(Mark **X** beside one)*	*Aboriginal*				
	Forest industry	*Small*			
		Medium			
		Large			
	Tourism industry				
	Other industry (please specify)				
	Trappers				
	Baitfishers				
	Outdoor Recreation	*ATV/Snowmobile*			
		Paddling/Hiking/Naturalists etc.			
		Hunters/Anglers			
	Local residents				
	Forest workers/labour				
	Youth				
	Women				
	Seniors				
	Municipal government				
	Provincial government				
	Federal government				
	Environmental/conservation				
	Scientists/Researchers				
	Mining industry				
	General public				
	Other (please specify)				
b) Number of years in this group					
c) Number of years in NSFC region					
d) Sex *(please **circle** one)*	*Female / Male*				
e) Age *(please **circle** one)*	*0-14*	*15-24*	*25-44*	*45-64*	*65+*

Appendix D. Survey Mailing List

Algoma University
Anishinabek Nation
Bait Association of Ontario
Borealis Forestry & GIS Services Inc.
Brunswick House First Nation
Buchanan Forest Products Ltd.
C & D Slashing
Canadian Forest Service
Chapleau Anglers and Hunters
Chapleau Arctic Watershed Snowmobile Club
Chapleau ATV Club
Chapleau Cree First Nation
Chapleau Economic Development Corporation
Chapleau Ojibwe First Nation
Clergue Forest Management Inc.
Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union
Domtar Inc.
Dubreuil Forest Products Limited
Economic Development Corporation Wawa
Economic Facilitator for Northwestern Ontario Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities
FEDNOR
Forest BioProducts Inc.
Friends of Fur
Hornepayne First Nation
Jackfish River Management Ltd.
Keith Spencer Trucking
Kenogami Lake Lumber Ltd.
Lake Superior Conservancy and Watershed Council
Lakehead University
Laurentian University
Magpie Forest Co-Management Committee
Manitouwadge Economic Development Corp.
Manitouwadge Public Consultation Committee
Martel Forest Local Citizens Committee
Michipicoten First Nation
Michipicoten Rod and Gun Club
Missanabie Cree First Nation
Missinaibi Headwaters Outfitters
MP, Algoma-Manitoulin-Kapuskasing
MPP Algoma Manitoulin
Municipality of Wawa
Nagagami Forest Co-Management Committee
Nature and Outdoor Tourism Ontario
Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund
Nishnawbe Aski Nation

Niska North Inc.
Nord-Aski Regional Economic Development Corp.
Northern Haul Contracting
Northwatch
Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association
Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation
Olav Haavaldsrud Timber Company Ltd.
Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Ontario Forest Industries Association
Ontario Forestry Association
Ontario Forestry Coalition
Ontario Fur Managers Federation
Ontario Lumber Manufacturers' Association
Ontario Minister of Natural Resources
Ontario Ministry of Environment
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Chapleau
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Manitouwadge
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Wawa
Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines
Ontario Nature/Federation of Ontario Naturalists
Ontario Parks
Pic Mobert First Nation
Pineland Forest Local Citizens Committee
Pukaskwa National Park
Raintree
St. Mary's Paper Corp.
Superior East Community Futures Development Corp.
Superior North Community Futures Development Corp.
Tembec
The Wilderness Group
Township of Chapleau
Township of Dubreuilville
Township of Hornpayne
Township of Manitouwadge
Township of White River
Township of White River, Economic Development
Tri-Timber Contracting Inc.
True North Timber
United Steelworkers
Wawa Area Co-Management Committee
Wawa Sno-Riders Club
Weyerhaeuser
White River Co-Management Committee
Wilderness Pursuits
Wildlands League