

Abstract

Wood Buffalo National Park (WBNP) was established in the 1920s as a bison sanctuary, and since then it has received major recognition for its wildlife resources. But, there has been little or no formal recognition of its significant cultural heritage. Yet the lands of the park are criss-crossed by multiple overland Indigenous trails that link together the settlements and areas of land use in the region and the region itself to other parts of northern Alberta and the NWT. The goal of my research was to use a collaborative approach with local Indigenous residents and a Parks Canada archaeologist to document one of these traditional trails and the cultural meanings and stories associated with it. My paper will discuss this project, consider what this trail research can reveal about the Indigenous cultural landscape of a northern national park and more broadly, offer suggestions for enhancing the UNESCO outstanding universal values (OUV)¹.

Introduction to the Problem

My involvement with WBNP began in 1998 when I was hired as the Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Advisor. As a member of the K'omok's First Nation on Vancouver Island, I moved to the Northwest Territories to join the Parks Canada team, and to work with 11 different Indigenous groups, each having a unique history with the park heritage. During the course of my time in the north (approximately 18 years), trails would often come up in discussions and some of the wardens at the time did manage to record a track log of some of the snowmobile trails with a global positioning system (gps) during the course of patrolling the park. But in 2008 we began a series of workshops to assist us with identifying and documenting important 'places' and 'stories' in the park with each group and to establish priorities from which to move forward on. In the process of doing this, a common topic of discussion that occurred with members from every community, was the concern about the condition of traditional overland trails in the park.

¹ To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of outstanding universal value based on at least one of the ten selection criteria. WBNP OUV is based on criteria vii, ix, x.

The historic overland trails are disappearing and there is not much information recorded about them, and even fewer have been mapped. To add to the concern, today there are very few individuals who hold knowledge about these overland trails and even fewer who have experience travelling on them. The people who once traveled these trails are getting older, and many no longer have the physical stamina to reopen these trails. Today there are also fewer people travelling on the land, and the younger generation is not growing up learning about these trails, their family trap lines, and the knowledge associated with them. Often they are leaving their community in order to obtain employment, including those jobs related to the oil sands operations to the south of the park. Often these industry proposed projects are bordering the national park and having adverse impacts to the park. In addition, the effects of climate change including impacts from wild fires and lack of a flood cycle within the Peace-Athabasca Delta, is making travel into the park and on existing trails that much more difficult, not to mention the concerns over the overall health of the park. So much so that a recent petition was led by the Mikisew Cree First Nation (MCFN) from Fort Chipewyan, AB, located just downstream from existing and planned hydroelectric and oil sands development projects. The petition is concerned about the integrity of the ecological values, those listed as the criteria for the current world heritage designation, and suggests that these resources are currently being threatened within the park and as a landscape as a whole. And for this reason, and others related to their specific long term connection to the park, the MCFN feel that WBNP ought to be added to the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger. Considering the current designation of the park is wholly recognized for its ecological values, I would like to build on this argument that the cultural integrity of the park is also at risk and should be given equal value in the assessment or understanding of the 'state of conservation'² of the park.

Within the scope of this project, it is not feasible to document all the trails at this time in the national park, but it was hoped that by documenting one trail in this way will serve as a pilot project providing an approach for future documentation

² A UNESCO term used to evaluate or monitor the overall state or condition of the designated site under threat.

and increased understanding of historic overland trails in the park and their role within a multi-generational northern cultural landscape, even providing insights into the ways in which Indigenous people construct landscapes. The Lake One trail is linked to a larger network of trails that speak to the Indigenous occupancy and the cultural landscape in the national park and the region.

First and foremost this paper provides a snapshot or summary description of the Lake One Trail and its cultural and natural resources that help to demonstrate its importance within WBNP, and how this information was collected. Second, I discuss the concept of Indigenous cultural landscapes (ICL) and how trails can play a role in our understanding and their documentation using Lake One Trail as a pilot study. Finally, based on the findings of this trail study, I offer suggestions for revising the current outstanding universal ecological values that currently make up the world heritage site designation, to consider a more balanced approach, one that is inclusive of the cultural values and heritage of the park.

Background

Canada's largest national park, exceeding the size of the Netherlands, Wood Buffalo National Park (WBNP) encompasses approximately 4.5 million hectares of Canada's boreal plains in northern Alberta and the southern Northwest Territories. WBNP has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1983 –

[The park]... includes one of the largest free-roaming, self-regulating bison herds in the world, the only remaining nesting ground of the endangered whooping crane, the biologically rich Peace-Athabasca Delta, extensive salt plains unique in Canada, and some of the finest examples of gypsum karst topography in North America (UNESCO 2017).

The park is comprised of a vast mosaic of boreal grasslands, wetlands and forests, with numerous rivers, creeks, lakes and ponds (UNESCO 2016:1). It was established in 1922 to protect the last remaining herds of free roaming bison in Canada and currently stands as the only place where the predator-prey relationship between wolves and wood bison has continued, unbroken, over time (UNESCO 2017). An annexation was made in 1926, resulting in a total area of 44,800 km². In 1982, the

Figure 1 Wood Buffalo National Park straddling the Alberta-NWT border and bordering communities



park's two largest wetlands, the Peace-Athabasca Delta and the whooping crane breeding grounds, were declared Wetlands of International Importance under the RAMSAR convention (UNESCO 2017, Parks Canada 2013). As such, there is well-defined international recognition of the park's natural resources. However, the human history of the park is not well understood. In fact, human occupancy and resource use in the park has been discouraged through the duration of the park's history.

Prior to the incursion of European peoples and their trade goods, Indigenous people in the Canadian North travelled widely to procure the resources they required to live. It is recognized that those who travelled the trails in the study area were likely to have ventured widely within a larger region that includes the lands that drain into the lower Peace River as well as the Peace-Athabasca Delta. The present day Wood Buffalo National Park has been home to at least five Indigenous groups during the previous three hundred years. Initially, Dene people who may have been the ancestors of the Slavey (Dene Tha) and the Beaver occupied the south-central region. By the mid-18th century, the Chipewyan (Dene Suline) and the Cree expanded into this area from the north and the south, respectively, some acting as middlemen in their growing involvement in the fur trade economy (Smith 1981a,b,c; Wright 1995,1999). This region of northern Alberta is described as a 'land without boundaries' (ACFN 2003: 31), referring to the broad overlap in traditional territories between the Cree and Chipewyan who historically have had language and/or cultural relationships and who at various times occupied or moved into the vicinity of what is now the parklands. Some mixed-ancestry people also arrived in the region as voyageurs and guides, and with later intermarriages between Europeans and all these groups, became the modern Metis population.

In WBNP, as with the earliest of Canadian national parks, national interests for wildlife preservation and policy related to threatened and rare wildlife species often took precedence over more local interests (Sandlos 2007:46-47). Throughout the first half of the 20th century, WBNP managers sought to eliminate the human users from the park in order to create a "natural" resource area and bison sanctuary, although ultimately they were unsuccessful in evicting all users. During this time, local Indigenous groups were subject to the oppressive forces of the enforcement of park and wildlife regulations and restrictions related to hunting and trapping (Sandlos, 2007; Potyondi, 1980; McCormack 1984). They were also subject to displacement, as some groups were pushed out of the park during its creation and the subsequent annexation. In addition, hunting and trapping permits were confiscated, and individuals were arrested and sent to jail. These events are documented in various warden reports from the 1920's through to the 1960's.

Today traditional use is still practiced by Indigenous people, almost all of whom live in small communities on the fringes of the park. Some are members of Treaty No. 8, while others are Metis. There is a growing number of traditional harvesting cabin applications from these groups who would like to build a cabin within the park boundaries for traditional use purposes. And even after nearly a century of park establishment, this persistence of traditional use over time, is one important reason to look at the trails and the land-use patterns in the park. The impacts and physical changes to the landscape over time with wild fires, the lack of cyclical flooding and the effects of climate change, while threatening the ecology of the park and the cultural values associated with these, also threatens the long standing Indigenous relationship with this area.

Wood Buffalo National Park is full of human history, stories and people travelling on the land and this research aims to highlight these features. WBNP differs from most of the other early national parks in that it also allowed, albeit reluctantly, some Indigenous occupation and use to continue after it was created. However, the intimate knowledge that Indigenous users had of the land and its resources was mostly ignored and not considered relevant to the development of park policies (McCormack 2010: 245-246). This knowledge, usually called traditional or local knowledge, is both individual and collective. It was gained and expanded over time as a result of experiences on the land. It represents not just the current generation, but many generations leading up to the present, accumulated through the experiences and stories passed down from one generation to the next. It entails having intimate knowledge of both the cultural and natural resources that together give meaning to place by virtue of experience of traveling through the landscape and the stories that it creates.

Purpose of the Study

With this in mind, there were two primary objectives for my research. The first was to document the Lake One Trail itself by using the memories of those alive today to identify who travelled it, as well as how, when and with what purpose. This

was done mostly by conducting formal interviews, but also by taking interviewees to revisit the trail itself. In doing so, the trail became a medium to document stories, identify places and understand how they connect both the past and present use.

The second objective was to describe the Lake One Trail's contribution to the cultural landscapes that Indigenous people created within the surrounding region. Unfortunately, the Indigenous relationship and connection to the lands within the park is not well documented or understood and consequently is often overlooked in the present management of the park. I hope that this study will identify specific heritage values that are overlooked or underrepresented in the management of the park. These can then be considered in a revised UNESCO World Heritage designation that currently reflects only the natural values of the park. Although the park is protected, impacts from hydroelectric dam and existing and proposed oil sands projects has shifted the parks current designation under UNESCO as a potential threatened site. This research supports a revised UNESCO World Heritage statement for WBNP that reflects cultural and heritage values along with the recognized natural features representing a more holistic view of the park values that can then be assessed in consideration of the threats that impact them.

Trails in WBNP

The first phase of the project involved gathering preliminary research about trails in WBNP by talking with community members and park staff to identify an appropriate trail, which would also define a specific study area. Because the park is large, and access to many areas is difficult, I looked at areas that could reach be reached relatively easily. Initial review of existing documentation on traditional trails both in the parks office and through preliminary discussions with community members, revealed a number of overland trails known in the park. Many of the pack trails – for horses, cat trails³, wagon roads and warden trails that were identified in the park were initially traditional trails.

³ Definition of cat trail meaning the trail or road was widened with a machine known as a caterpillar

Based on the research findings, the Lake One trail in particular may be one of the oldest known trails in Wood Buffalo National Park (WBNP) today, situated between two early known archaeological sites. It represents the long-term use of the trail by different groups. Although previous archaeological investigations and traditional knowledge have indicated that this area has been used for thousands of years, this study focused on the time period from 1920 to 2015, and includes living memory.

Along with its complex history, I also learned that there are many trails that lead to the Lake One study area. The Lake One trail itself is described as a main artery or highway through which many other traditional trails criss-crossed and all of these together represent the historic and current land-use of the park and the evolving relationship with people over time. As mentioned, many of the trails in the park may have started as walking trails- turned dog team trail, turned skidoo trail and even cat trail (G. Masson personal communication, June 2014).

During the field survey, portions of four trails were documented including the Lake One Trail (2469R), 30th Meridian Trail (2470R), Wolf Ridge Trail (2490R) and Lawrence Vermillion Trail (2515R).



Figure 2 Location of the project area within WBNP

Study Area (WBNP)

Referred to as the Lake One Study Area it is situated on the south side of the Peace River and borders the northern extent of the Peace-Athabasca Delta. The study area is contained within what was called the “new park,” the lands annexed in 1926 to the original park lands. Between 1925 -28 over 6000 bison were shipped by rail to waterways and by barge down river to the park. Consequently, during the

winter of 1925-26 plains bison left the park crossing the Peace River to feed on the lush meadows of Lake Claire area – so enlarging the park (McCormack 1984:140).

The trail leading into Lake One Prairie is known as the Lake One Trail, but it is also described as part of Group Trapping Area (GTA) 1209, used primarily by three local families: the Cheezie, Vermillion and Simpson families. I worked closely with individuals from these families who used the trail and shared historical connections to the study area. The Lake One Trail was chosen because of its significance as an historic overland trail and its role as part of a larger network of trails in the region both in the park and in northern Alberta. It was also chosen for its accessibility and for the number of individuals who have used the trail in the past. It is a multi-use trail – historically used by trappers and for park operations.

This area was also rich ecologically – in the past when there was more water in the study area thousands of muskrat could be found in these lakes, along with an abundance of waterfowl, lynx, wolves and large game animals like moose and bison.

Lake One Trail

In describing the Lake One trail, consideration is given to the fact that the trail often branches off into more than one dog team or skidoo trail, and there was also more than one access point into the Lake One study area depending on which direction the traveller was coming from. With this in mind, for this trail study, I chose only one section or route of the Lake One trail approximately 8km in length that starts with the ‘cat road’ at the north end along the south shore of the Peace River across from Peace Point, and eventually branches off as a dog team trail leading south onto the Lake One Prairie. The exact age of the trail is unknown but within living memory it was documented as being used by the informant’s grandparent’s generation and possibly earlier. Within the confines of this study, at least dating back to the early 1900’s.

The first 3.5 km trail section that was cleared for this study is considered part of a cat road, short for caterpillar road.⁴ Local parks employees widened the Lake One trail with a cat in 1965 and the original route was chosen using local knowledge and experience. Cat roads are usually straight, created with machines that allowed other types of over snow vehicles or trucks to travel on the trail and carry supplies and equipment to places like the Lake One Bison Corral⁵. The Lake One trail in particular had not been used in 10-15 years. It was no longer in use so was also not being maintained on a regular basis. The overgrown vegetation, deadfall and damage from major forest fires in 2005 and 2007 made it difficult and challenging to find, navigate and clear the Lake One Trail.

Methodology

As a qualitative research project using a collaborative methodology, the project combined oral history and place name documentation with archaeology to identify important sites along a section of the Lake One overland trail. Local First Nation elders who reside in Fort Chipewyan and Fort Smith informed the methodology of the project by identifying the location and purpose of the trail, its major landmarks and features and the place names and stories associated with it. This information was used to clear a section of the trail and subsequent four day archaeological survey of the trail in October 2014 with local knowledge holders and a Parks Canada archaeologist along a section of the trail supported by a field camp.

To prepare for the trail survey, interviews were conducted ahead of time with the knowledge holders in the community. Individual interviews took place both in the community and during the on-the land trail documentation. The interviews were semi-structured and questions were open-ended except for questions about relevant personal history. Site-specific knowledge was recorded on topographic maps and then digitized and interviews recorded on audiotape. All the interviews were transcribed and the interviewees had an opportunity to review the transcript

⁴ a caterpillar trail (meaning it was made with a cat train. The term cat roads and cat trails refer to the same type of trail and are used interchangeably in the study.

⁵ A bison corral was built in 1965 at Lake One and was in operation for one year.

to verify accuracy. During this time, the trail was partially cleared in the winter and spring of 2014 and a helicopter reconnaissance with community members helped determine trail visibility and plot visible sections of the trail using GPS.

During the field survey, walking along the trail, individuals shared stories of their travels in the area and places of interest capturing some of the traditional knowledge associated with the trail. Traveling the full length of the trail was not possible due to its poor condition as even after trail clearing, much of it remained impassable. However, the survey did involve stopping to build a fire, make tea and have lunch while stories and experiences of travelling on the trail were shared.

Along with the oral history, cultural and natural features associated with the trail were identified and described using standard archaeological recording methods that recorded the condition of the features, photographs, gps locations, drawings and sketch maps. All surface artifacts or features were mapped. Video and audio recordings were made throughout the trail survey and helped to document the trail and on-the-land interviews with participants while walking the trail.

This research also drew on information from a variety of secondary sources, including historic documents and maps, ethnographic descriptions, air photo collections, archaeological investigations and local knowledge, including place name documentation. This included records from explorers, surveyors, fur traders and geologists who travelled through the region (Raup 1935, MacKenzie 1931, Hearne 1911). Together, the archaeological record, oral traditions, and documentary evidence allow us to glimpse to an earlier time and tell us stories of the people who came together at this particular place. This research also contributes to the broader literature about oral history, cultural landscapes and place-based research; Andrews [1997, 2004, 2011], Ingold [2000], Basso [1996].

During the analysis of the interview transcripts it became apparent that the natural resources were directly linked to the cultural resources, and all of these resources identified during the trail documentation were plotted on a map for a visual reference. From this information, I was able to provide a synopsis of the natural attributes at the Lake One Prairie that indicate the types of resources

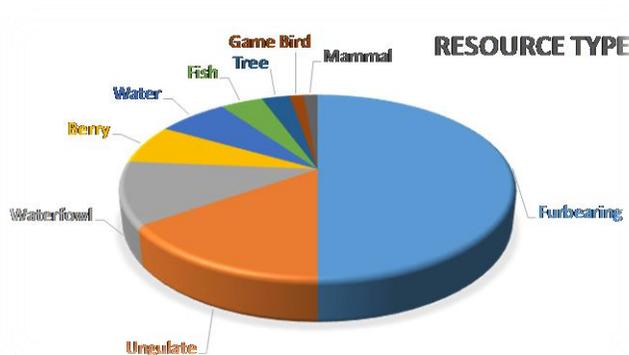
harvested within the study area. This information is accompanied by a summary table of resources that supports the seasonality of the trail and indicates the season the resources were harvested and their location.

Lake One Trail - Summary of Natural Attributes

As a group trapping area, the trappers identified the types of resources found along the trail and in the Lake One study area, along with the time of year they were accessed. A dominant theme found in all the interviews was the topic of seasonality and spring was the main season the trail and the Lake One study area was accessed for trapping and resource harvesting. Historically the trail has been used year round to access a variety of resources, but more often during the spring to hunt for muskrat and to collect eggs from the waterfowl that would arrive and stay into the summer. These resources were often mentioned and interwoven in the stories of traversing the trail either by walking or by dog team and later by skidoo. Close to 75% the resources (N= 50) were documented as being harvested or observed during the spring and winter seasons. Often these two seasons were mentioned within the same experience. There are also stories of the trail being accessed by anyone in need of food at times when resources were sparse (D. Huisman personal communication, 2014). The main types of resources acquired at Lake One in the spring were the muskrat and the beaver, ducks and geese eggs. However, the study area was accessed during other times of the year for many other types of resources including bison, barren ground caribou, moose, bear, deer, grouse (chickens), waterfowl such as ducks and geese, fish and an abundance of fur bearing animals such as beaver, wolves, wolverine, lynx, fishers, marten, mink, muskrat, rabbit, and squirrel. Both high and low bush cranberries, raspberries, saskatoons and blueberries were also known to have been collected along the trail. Considering the trail is part of a group trap line it is no surprise that approximately half of the resources documented in the Lake One study area were considered furbearing resources. In total 9 different resource types were identified based on just over 71 recorded occurrences shared by six knowledge holders. Ungulates (i.e. moose and

caribou) were the second most abundant resource cited during the study followed closely by waterfowl and their eggs. Fish, berries, mammals, game birds (grouse), fresh drinking water and materials harvested from trees were also important, but were not the main resources obtained at Lake One (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Lake One Trail - Summary of Natural Resource Types



Lake One Prairie Seasonal Round

Lawrence Vermillion recalls trapping muskrat at Lake One right until May 10th when trapping season closed. “In March the muskrats are fully grown and fat with thicker hides, thicker fur and sold for a better price” ... muskrat and beaver hunting took place in the springtime or after open water. “Besides trapping we would also shoot muskrats with a 22 rifle. However, trapping the muskrat meant that they drowned right away and were better eating and good for dry meat.” His family also planted a garden in the spring consisting of potatoes, carrots and turnips and remembers hauling water from the river “pail after pail” up the big hill to water the garden. Ducks, geese and waxies were hunted and his family travelled to Lake Claire to “catch the thousands of birds in the bays.” Once at Lake Claire, trappers from all over, but particularly from Lake Claire, Hay River (also known as Prairie River) and the Peace River areas, spent late spring and summer in Fort Chipewyan, at the Quatre Fourche and Lake Mamawi fishing whitefish and making dry fish. This was also a time when Lawrence’s dad would travel to Edmonton for a month or

more in June or July to visit friends. He travelled by boat to Fort McMurray and then by train.

In August, fish go all the way up the Peace River and Lawrence's family would start their journey back to their cabin on the Peace River by skiff, pulling two canoes behind them. "We lived off the land hunting bear – living on bear meat, smoked meat and fish." On their way to the trap line they stopped on large sand bars at Point Providence to hunt birds usually for one week or until they had a good supply for the winter. They lived in a tent during this time travelling the Peace River to prepare for winter. Fishing was good on the Peace River, mainly goldeyes that could also be fed to the dogs. The importance of fish in their diet continued to be an essential resource as described by Lawrence during his family's seasonal travel to their cabin in the 1950's:

By October we would be at the cabin on the Peace River and start getting ready for winter. We fished for dogs [dog food] and hung fish for dog feed for winter. We set nets by boat and fished for a long time – a minimum of 10 days and we had a few thousand fish, at least two thousand or more (mostly goldeyes, jackfish, pickerel and moreis [lings]).

Lawrence never trapped muskrat in the fall because "they are not fully grown and the skin is not as good yet." He explained that 'paper rats' referred to those muskrats that live on riverbanks or low water all year round. He described them as being skinny and having thin fur or hides. There were lots of blueberries and cranberries in the fall and he recalled the whole family taking day trips to go berry picking. By mid-October it was moose season but one year they ate goldeyes three meals a day because there were not many moose..."sometimes we would see moose when we were setting traps, but we ate all kinds of different meats, including porcupine." The caribou came in November after freeze-up. "When the caribou came we shoot them right from our cabin, my mother was a good shot with a 3030." Along the 30th baseline trail the hills were covered with lichen, good habitat for large herds of barren ground caribou. In winter these caribou move into the forest to feed on the lichens and take shelter from the wind. They migrate annually

between forest and tundra. “During the winter we trap fine furs such as wolf, lynx, marten, fishers, minks, squirrels and weasels. Fine furs are also known as long-haired fur.” His dad [and often the whole family] would then travel to Fort Chipewyan three times each winter: Christmas, the end of February and at Easter to sell the furs. In later years, when the trapping slowed down trappers started to take on seasonal work for the park in the summer fighting fires, building corrals for the bison round ups, or working for the sawmill camps located in the park (Lawrence Vermillion personal communication, 2015).

Lake One Trail - Summary of Cultural Attributes

Walking a section of the trail with elders and youth helped bring out the stories of past trail use and to identify and understand the types of features to look for on the landscape and along the trail. Without the elders knowledge it would have been more difficult to locate the features such as the cabin foundations near the Simpson’s cabins, as it was challenging to locate these features due to the overgrown vegetation. Examples of other trail features included culturally modified trees, spiritual sites, tent camps, garbage middens, depressions, and artifacts (e.g., stove parts, metal cans, metal squeeze chute, fuel barrel, mammal bone and lithic tools). These features were all located with the help of local knowledge and reading the landscape. As a result, six previously known sites and four new sites were documented during the survey (Table 1).

In total, 23 cultural resources were mentioned and mapped based on the information collected from the interviews and the trail survey. They include archaeological sites, cabins and their foundations, traditional and historic tent camps, lunch and picnic spots, spiritual sites and semi-subterranean dwellings. Approximately 50% (N=11) of the sites were new or previously not documented by the park and 40% (n=9) of the total number of documented sites were visited during the field survey.

Table 1 Previously recorded sites within the study area

Peace Point and Lake One Dune Archaeological Sites

Two known precontact archaeological sites were revisited during the field survey, and each is located at opposite ends of the trail. The Peace Point site previously recorded by Stevenson (1981,1982, 1986) is more well-known than the Lake

WBNP site no.	WBNP Site Name
30R1	Peace Point Archaeological Site
34R1	Lake One Dune Archaeological Site
34R197	Simpson Cabins
2338R	Spiritual site known as the Little Man
34R86	Lake One Cabins
2343R	Bison Squeeze Chute

One Dune site, likely because of the excavation that occurred there in the 1980's, which involved some of the local trappers and hunters who were living at Peace Point at the time, including Archie Simpson and his family. These two sites are very different types of sites, however both have been impacted by natural erosion processes. Peace Point is located right on the north bank of the Peace River was salvage archaeological excavation from being lost to the river by the impacts of the freeze and thaw cycle and the constant erosion of the riverbank. The Lake One Dune site previously recorded by Hems (1994 a,b,c) and Flynn (1995) is situated on top of an esker overlooking the Lake One Prairie has been impacted by wind erosion coupled with constant wildlife trampling.

Cabins and Foundations

More than half (N=12) of the cultural resources cited by the informants were remains of historic cabins or the foundations of cabins. All of the cabins were located on a 1:60,000 topo map and some were visited. During the trail survey. The cabins dated within the park era (after 1922), with the earliest cabin built in the 1930's and the latest in the 1980's. Five of the cabins are associated with the Simpson homestead on the Peace River and approximately six were associated with non-Indigenous trappers who had trapped in the area for a brief time. A warden

cabin was known to have existed at Peace Point across from the northern trail head but the footprint or foundation was not located.



Figure 4 Isidore Simpson Cabin on the Lake One Trail

Isidore Simpson's cabin maintains a strong connection to the Lake One Trail. This cabin along with the John Simpson cabin are both located on the south side of the Peace River across from Peace Point at the beginning of the trailhead. This dovetailed log building built in 1932, sits directly on top of an older foundation. The earlier cabin was destroyed by a flood in 1931 and replaced with the current dovetail axe-hewn log cabin built by a local Metis and chief carpenter (or French builder) named Adam Dene (who lived just up the Peace River beside the Cheezie cabin) and Isidore Simpson himself. Adam was very skilled with an axe and the building has been described as 'well built by a local carpenter who took the time to do a good job'. It is one of only three historic cabins from this time period that we know are still standing today in the park.

Traditional and historic tent camps/ lunch spots

These often indicate temporary or transient nature of use of the place that has continued over time. Noted were locations of traditional tent camps but others such as the Parks tent camp, once abandoned, was also used by local trappers and hunters for traditional use. Memorable lunch or rest spots were pointed out on the map and the reasons why they would stop at a particular place along the trail.

Spiritual site – the Little Man

Associated with the Lake One study area is the story of the Little Man located at a site just off of the Lake One Trail it is commonly associated with the Lake One Prairie. Stories about the Lake One trail are often associated with the Little Man, a carved wooden face on a tree just off the trail. Known as a ‘place of offering’ or shrine located on high ground just off the trail. When asked about the site, Lawrence Cheezie (2014) recalled how the old people talked about it... he referred to it as ‘Deneza’ in Chipewyan meaning, “little people living in hollow trees.” Fred described it as a wooden stump with stones laid around it similar to a graveyard. When resources were scarce, Lake One was a reliable place to get food and people would place objects at the base of the carving prior to or after trapping and hunting in the area.

Summary of Cultural Resources on the Lake One Trail (2469R) and Study Area	Quantity
Precontact Site	2
Lake One Dune (34R1)	1
Peace Point (30R1)	1
Cabin	8
John Simpson Cabin (34R197)	1
Lake One Cabin Remains	6
Isidore Simpson Cabin (34R197)	1
Cabin Foundation	4
Simpson and Vermillion cabin foundations (34R197)	3
Peace Point Cabin; Cabin #2	1
Historic Tent Camp	1

Parks Tent Camp (2467R)	1
Traditional Tent Camps	1
Associated with families who trapped at Lake One long ago	Unknown
Lunch or picnic spot	1
Rest stop on the way to Fort Chipewyan by dog team	1
Semi-subterranean dwellings	2
Pit House or Dwelling	2
Spiritual Site	4
the Little Man (2338R)	1
Child's Burial Site	1
* Anticline; 'the church'	1
* Red Rock Island; Drum Island; Red Stone Island; Firestone Island	1
Total	23
* Associated with the spiritual aspects of the Lake One Prairie	

Table 2 Summary of cultural resources recorded in the study area

Discussion

Landscapes are constantly changing. It is well known that landscapes evolve and people's relationship with the landscape also changes and evolves. Cultural landscapes have been described as a living landscape by Andrews and Buggey who discuss also define authenticity of the landscape...“while cultural landscapes change so do the cultures that commemorate them (2008:64).”

With this in mind, McCormack (2017:120) writes about the unbroken history of land use in the region of Northern Alberta. This region was known to have been occupied by mainly Chipewyan and Cree at the time of European contact, but was also occupied by groups ahead of them. Each group is known to have followed other groups immediately before them, and all of the descendants from these groups have learned land uses from those who came before them. McCormack further states that collectively and over time, all these groups have contributed to construction and maintaining the landscape, and she identifies three ways in which this was achieved. The first was by extensive travel across the land by foot creating a network of ancient trails that show regional patterns of land use. The second was through the

use of controlled burning (Lewis 1982; McCormack 2007) as individuals modified the landscape to attract certain wildlife or to maintain trails giving access to ecologically rich areas. The third is described as the way in which Indigenous groups ascribe meaning to place, informing their distinct cultures and identities through the process of experience and knowledge obtained from their intimate and continuous relationship with the landscape. Nelson (1983) builds on this concept when he describes the Koyukon imprint on the land as something intangible that lives in the minds and hearts of the people whose reciprocal relationship with the land over time has shaped not only the people, but has actually shaped and made the land what it is today. This intangible aspect is in the minds of the people in the form of knowledge and traditions that are passed down between generations whose relationship evolves through the time and experiences of those who spend time on this landscape (See also Ingold 1993, 2000; Ryden 1993; Andrews and Buggey 2008; Basso 1996; Pandya 1990).

Without access to this knowledge and the personal connections through individual and family histories the landscape itself seems empty to the outsider new to the place. This might seem the case to the many newcomers to WBNP past and present and to the untrained eye, essentially the land seems unaltered and lacks visible signs of human activity. Words provided by the Webster's definition of 'wilderness' include barren, empty, pathless and uninhabited. Nelson points out that we could look at this in a different light, instead consider the barren landscape as being something unique to the people who were the caretakers and stewards of the land. Leaving a lasting legacy not in the way of monuments or ruins (and he uses Machu Picchu as an example) but rather that their legacy could be more about recognizing their contributions to conservation of this land in total (1983:242-246).

Indigenous landscapes (including ancestral, ethnographic, or associative landscapes) help to bridge the connection between people (the ancestors or those who walked the land before us), their stories and a particular geographic area. As described by Buggey (1999) an 'associative cultural landscape' may be recognized for their cultural and spiritual associations with a people. Ethnographic landscapes defined as "a landscape containing a variety of natural and cultural resources that

associated people define as heritage resources” (Birnbaum, 1994: 1-2). I may be inclined to describe the Lake One Prairie as an ‘ancestral landscape’ for the strong connection it has between its past and present use. The Lake One trail demonstrates these links and associations with the ancestors - those who have gone before us, along with their descendants, and the collective relationship to a geographic area of land. And I may go as far as describing the Lake One trail as not just a physical trail that leads from one place to another, but one that transcends time and space and is not bounded by one generation.

The Lake one trail and study area contains both the physical objects and structures left on the land (the tangible), but also holds the stories and place name information that may not be obvious but that give meaning to these places and intangible values that are both cultural and natural. Stories passed on through oral tradition and the traditional knowledge closely tied to the land are revealed through language and the place names that describe the landscape features and resources found within it. These remain as a legacy of those ancestral footprints and highlight the importance of ‘experience’ or movement in the landscape.

Patterns on the Landscape

Movement in and through the landscape is an important part of what a cultural landscape is. The act of moving through the landscape and the interactions that occur in the process, allows the traveller to build knowledge of the trail on which they are travelling including the plants and animals and the spiritual aspects that form an integral part of the landscape. Activities or movement within this indigenous landscape also leave patterns on the land. These patterns contain layers of information that can demonstrate how the place was used by different people at different times, either as physical layers recognized as archaeological sites and should include trails, or as stories told about a place by different people. Understanding the relationship with named places that tell how people moved on the land increases our understanding of the cultural landscape. Events in the stories usually take place in many locations and it is important to see the

connections within a cultural landscape, rather than just a series of parts or places (NWT Cultural Places Program 2000:14-15). Another reason why the use of trails can help guide us in exploring and delineating the landscape just by their linear nature or shape but as I learned from the trail documentation in this study often these trails form loops or branch off into more than one trail at junctions as did the Lake One Trail.

This brings me back to the importance and role of trails themselves that help to view the landscape as a 'whole.' The Lake One Trail includes all the values that make up the landscape including people, cultural, natural and spiritual aspects and is a good example of how a trail can make connections to a larger cultural landscape... one that is part of a seasonal cycle related to the harvesting of resources. Dotted throughout the trail and the associated landscape are various cultural and spiritual places, that would seem like isolated points on the map without the trail that connects them. Oral tradition guides you down the trail, to and from particular sites and also provides essential cultural context. A trail within a cultural landscape can be used as a cultural filter to help us understand the important link between the culture and the land, allowing us to see the landscape through the individual's point of view of the world by connecting places and providing important links that we may not have seen otherwise. Trails are very important because they transcend time along with physical space and boundaries, promote greater access and help bring different cultural groups together... to work together and could even be a crucial link that allows for an inclusive approach to engaging with the indigenous groups affiliated with WBNP.

The functionality of trails is broader than one might have initially thought. For example, trails have more than one function today – having access to these trails takes us back in time, allows us to reconnect with the old ways, the old roadways, window into the past – brings out the stories brings past back to life. The study had an element of cultural revitalization in that together we returned to a traditional trail and in the process of clearing the trail and reopening it, it became a medium for telling stories and revealing the place names and connections people have with the trail.

World Heritage Site (OUV) in a modernized context

Lake One trail study has demonstrated that a wealth of cultural and ecological knowledge comes from documenting one trail, and provides opportunities for exploring how the trail can help us understand an Indigenous cultural landscape found within WBNP. Working with knowledge holders in a collaborative way, numerous places and resources were identified along the trail through the stories and experience of travelling on the land, and provided important context about how these resources represent the cultural, ecological and spiritual values within the Lake One Prairie study area. The results of the trail study very clearly showed the balance between the natural and cultural values and all of these resources together make up the indigenous cultural landscape of the Lake One Trail.

The individual's strong connection and knowledge was gained not only through their own travel, but also from their ancestors who have gone before them, demonstrating unbroken ties to this land and providing an example of how much they value this place and how important the area is to their families and their communities as a whole. This high value placed on the lands in the park is also demonstrated through the MCFN recent petition. The human element of the landscape has been there throughout the long history of park establishment and based on the recommendations outlined in the Mission Report from the fall of 2016, perhaps, provides an opportunity to build on more work like this in the future that will help bring out the human elements of the park that have been long overlooked.

Conclusion

“Importance of continued use, access, continuing practices, continuity of memory and identity, interaction between elders and youth – conserving the cultural value of Indigenous cultural landscapes - without them the landscape loses the traditional knowledge and practices that are essential to its cultural value and authenticity (Kawharu 2009: 68)

This trail study revealed that even after nearly a century of park establishment, vestiges and elements of this Indigenous cultural landscape are still visible. The stories collected helped to identify areas of high potential for archaeological research in the park, which can provide opportunities for future investigation and interpretation with emphasis on collaborative partnerships in sharing the cultural heritage of the park, such as stories about the people, the land and the trails in the park.

Through dissemination and sharing of this research, I hope to increase understanding, recognition and respect for the Indigenous landscape of WBNP. Along with increased understanding of the distinctiveness of a northern Indigenous cultural landscape and insights into the ways in which Indigenous people construct landscapes, this research can contribute to an awareness and a new dialogue and concepts about how we think about the national park landscape – not only its cultural and natural values, but also how we perceive and manage the park.

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