

APPENDIX S

ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE TECHNICAL SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

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Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report: CHR 1, Springpole Lake to Birch Lake Travel Route, Kenora District, Ontario

Springpole Gold Project

First Mining Gold Corp.

ONS2104

Prepared by:
WSP Canada Inc.

October 2024



Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report: CHR 1, Springpole Lake to Birch Lake Travel Route, Kenora District, Ontario Springpole Gold Project

Red Lake District, Northwest Ontario
Project #ONS2104

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

First Mining Gold Corp. (FMG) proposes to develop, operate and eventually decommission / close an open pit gold and silver mine and ore process plant with supporting facilities known as the Springpole Gold Project (Project). The Project is located in a remote area of northwestern Ontario, approximately 110 kilometres (km) northeast of the Municipality of Red Lake and 145 km north of the Municipality of Sioux Lookout.

An environmental assessment pursuant to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, 2012 (SC 2012, c. 19, s. 52) and the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* (RSO 1990, c. E.18) is required to be completed for the Project. This report is one of a series of Technical Support Documents prepared by WSP Canada Inc. on behalf of FMG to describe the predicted environmental effects of the Project.

In 2022, WSP Canada Inc. prepared a Cultural Heritage Report: Existing Conditions and Preliminary Impact Assessment (Cultural Heritage Report) for the Project and identified CHR 1, Springpole Lake to Birch Lake Travel Route, as a potential cultural heritage landscape. CHR 1 intersects with an active exploration camp maintained by FMG, in the unorganized District of Kenora, Ontario (the Study Area). While presently used infrequently, CHR 1 is currently maintained in good condition by FMG. The Study Area is comprised of an existing portage at the exploration site between Springpole Lake and Birch Lake that is connected by informal circulation routes which has been utilized since at least the early 20th century. While currently used infrequently, the portage is maintained in good condition by FMG. The Study Area is located, approximately 110 kilometres (km) northeast of the Municipality of Red Lake and 145 km north of the Municipality of Sioux Lookout. To date, the Study Area has no known heritage recognitions and is not protected at a municipal, provincial, or federal level (see Section 5.0; Government of Canada 2023; Ontario Heritage Trust 2023; UNESCO 2023).

Based on historical background research, community engagement, and the property inspection, it was determined that CHR 1 meets the criteria for cultural heritage value or interest (CHVI) prescribed in Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 9/06 (as amended by O. Reg 569/22) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (RSO 1990, c. O.18) for historical/associative and contextual reasons. Therefore, the following conclusions are made:

1. Acknowledging FMG's ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities as part of the EA process, the results of this Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report will be included as part of the final Environmental Impact Statement / Environmental Assessment submission to the federal and provincial government and will be circulated to those Indigenous communities participating in the EA process.
2. It is anticipated that the Project will impact CHR 1. Accordingly, the preparation of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required to meet the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The HIA should be prepared during detailed design prior to construction and assess the impacts of the proposed work, identify conservation strategies, and recommend mitigation measures. The HIA should consider the selection of an alternative portage site, as identified through engagement with Cat Lake First Nation (CLFN) during the EA process, as a preferred mitigative strategy.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

&	Percent
CEAA 2012	<i>Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012</i>
CHER	Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report
CHVI	Cultural Heritage Value or Interest
CLFN	Cat Lake First Nation
EA	Environmental Assessment
FMG	First Mining Gold Corporation
Ha	hectare
HBC	Hudson Bay Company
km	kilometres
LSFN	Lac Seul First Nation
m	metres
MCM	Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism
NWOMC	Northwestern Ontario Métis Community
MON	Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation
O. Reg.	Ontario Regulation
PFN	Pikangikum First Nation
SCHVI	Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest
SFN	Slate Falls Nation
TLRU	Traditional Land and Resource Use
WFN	Wabauskang First Nation
WSP	WSP Canada Inc.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Adjacent lands:	Those lands contiguous to a protected heritage property or as otherwise defined in the municipal official plan (MMAH 2024).
Built Heritage Resource:	A building, structure, monument, installation or any manufactured or constructed part or remnant that contributes to a property's cultural heritage value or interest as identified by a community, including an Indigenous community (MMAH 2024).
Conserved:	The identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained. This may be achieved by the implementation of recommendations set out in a conservation plan, archaeological assessment, and/or heritage impact assessment that has been approved, accepted or adopted by the relevant planning authority and/or decision-maker. Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches should be included in these plans and assessments (MMAH 2024).
Cultural Heritage Landscape:	A defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Indigenous community. The area may include features such as buildings, structures, spaces, views, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association (MMAH 2024).
Heritage Attributes:	In relation to real property, and to the buildings and structures on the real property, the attributes of the property, buildings and structures that contribute to their cultural heritage value or interest (RSO 1990, c. O.18)
Protected Heritage Property:	Property designated under Part IV or VI of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> ; property included in an area designated as a heritage conservation district under Part V of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> ; property subject to a heritage conservation easement or covenant under Part II or IV of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> ; property identified by a provincial ministry or a prescribed public body as a property having cultural heritage value or interest under the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties; property protected under federal heritage legislation; and UNESCO World Heritage Sites (MMAH 2024).
Significant:	In regard to cultural heritage and archaeology, resources that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest. Processes and criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest are established by the Province under the authority of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> (MMAH 2024).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

First Mining Gold Corp. (FMG) proposes to develop an open pit mine with supporting facilities known as the Springpole Gold Project (Project). The Project is located in a remote area of northwestern Ontario, approximately 110 kilometres (km) northeast of the Municipality of Red Lake and 145 km north of the Municipality of Sioux Lookout (Figure 1-1).

An environmental assessment (EA) pursuant to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, 2012 (SC 2012, c. 19, s. 52; CEAA 2012) and the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* (RSO 1990, c. E.18) is required to be completed for the Project. This report is one of a series of Technical Support Documents prepared by WSP Canada Inc. (WSP) on behalf of FMG to describe the predicted environmental effects of the Project.

In 2022, WSP prepared a Cultural Heritage Report: Existing Conditions and Preliminary Impact Assessment (Appendix S-6 of the EIS/EA) for the Project and identified CHR 1, Springpole Lake to Birch Lake Travel Route, as a potential cultural heritage landscape. The Cultural Heritage Report recommended that a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) be completed since direct impacts are anticipated to the landscape as a result of the Project. CHR 1 intersects with an active exploration site with infrastructure and heavy equipment, and while used infrequently, is currently maintained in good condition by FMG. The Study Area is comprised of the portage between Springpole Lake and Birch Lake that is connected by informal circulation routes which has been utilized since at least the early 20th century. The Study Area is located approximately 110 kilometres (km) northeast of the Municipality of Red Lake and 145 km north of the Municipality of Sioux Lookout.

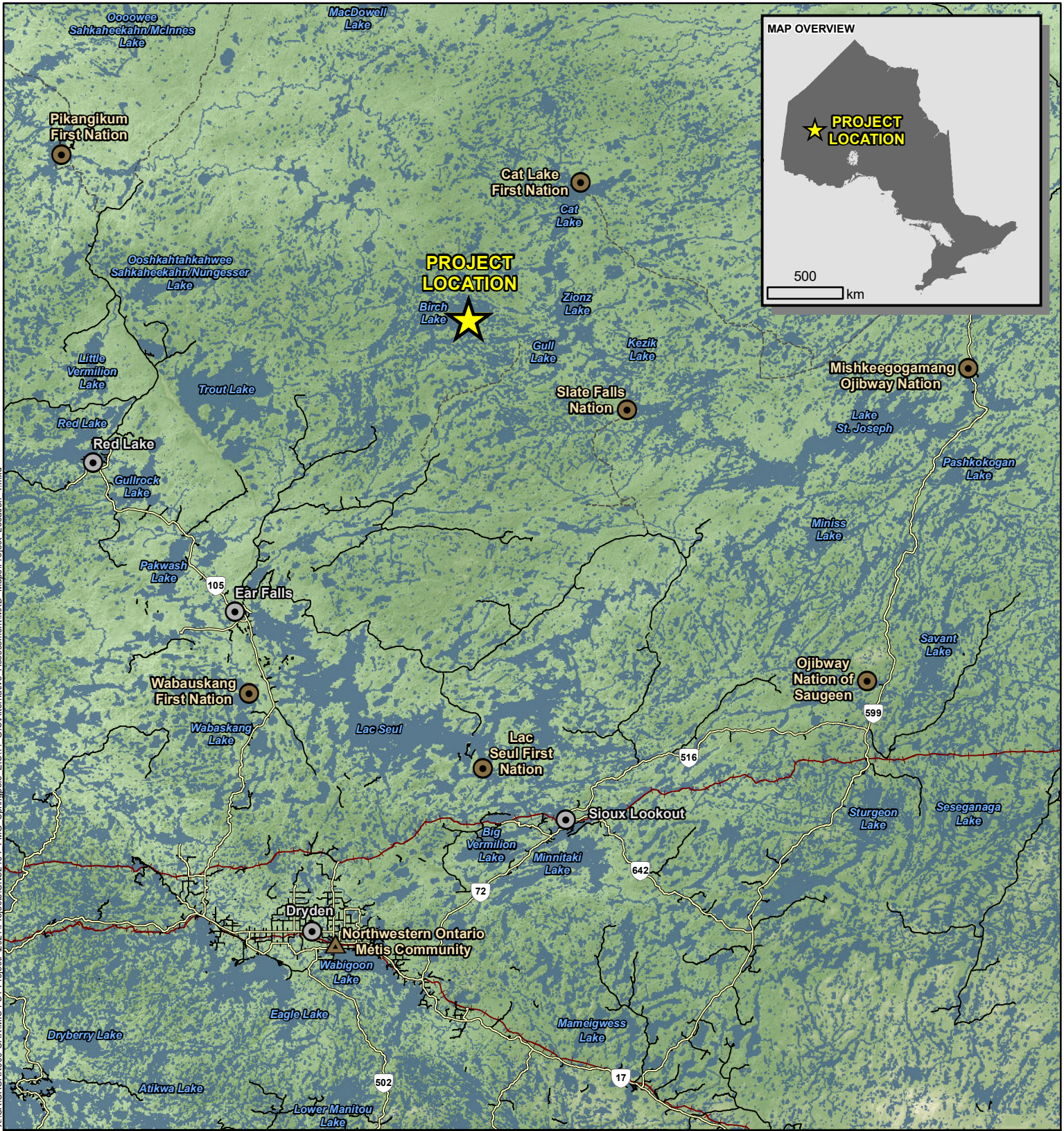
This Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) was prepared in accordance with the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism's (MCM) *Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties* (MCM 2010) and Heritage Identification and Evaluation Process (MCM 2014), and the *Ontario Heritage Act* (RSO 1990, c. O.18).

The purpose of this CHER is to determine if the Study Area possesses cultural heritage value or interest (CHVI) through an evaluation of the property against the criteria of Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 9/06, Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (as amended by O. Reg. 569/22) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. This CHER documents the results of the background research, site visit, evaluation of the property and, if warranted, a draft statement of CHVI.

1.1 Description of the Property

The Study Area, which is associated with the previously identified CHR 1, is comprised of an irregularly shaped landscape that extends from Birch Lake to Springpole Lake interconnected by a portage with informal circulation pathways. The Study Area covers approximately 11.6 hectares (ha), generally bound by Springpole Lake to the south, Birch Lake to the north and thick forest to the east and west (Figure 1-2, Figure 1-3). The Study Area is approximately 200 m east of the Springpole Lake exploration camp operated by FMG and intersects with an active exploration site. The Study Area presently has no known heritage recognitions and is not protected at a municipal, provincial, or federal level (see Section 5.0; Government of Canada 2023; Ontario Heritage Trust 2023; UNESCO 2023).

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LEGEND ★ Project Location ○ Town ● First Nation Reserve ▲ Northwestern Ontario Métis Community — Highway — Secondary Road --- Resource / Winter Road —+— Railway	NOTES: - Topographic information extracted from LIO, MNRF.	 FIRST MINING GOLD 	
		SPRINGPOLE GOLD PROJECT	
		Project Location	
Datum: NAD83 Projection: UTM Zone 15N 		PROJECT N°: ONS2104	FIGURE: 1-1
		SCALE: 1:1,500,000	DATE: September 2024



- LEGEND
- Study Area
 - Travel Route (CHR 1)



NOTE(S)

1. ALL LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE

- REFERENCE(S)**
1. CONTAINS INFORMATION LICENSED UNDER THE OPEN GOVERNMENT LICENCE - ONTARIO
 2. AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY FIRST MINING GOLD, 2020.
 3. KEY MAP: WORLD TOPOGRAPHIC MAP: ESRI CANADA, ESRI, © OPENSTREETMAP CONTRIBUTORS, HERE, GARMIN, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS, AAFC, NR CAN IMAGE:
 4. COORDINATE SYSTEM: NAD 1983 UTM ZONE 15N

CLIENT

FIRST MINING GOLD

PROJECT

SPRINGPOLE LAKE TO BIRCH LAKE TRAVEL ROUTE CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION REPORT

TITLE

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA

CONSULTANT	YYYY-MM-DD	2024-10-24
DESIGNED	####	
PREPARED	####	
REVIEWED	####	
APPROVED	####	



PROJECT NO.	CONTROL	REV.	FIGURE
ONS2104	0001	A	1-3

2.0 LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012

CEAA 2012 calls for the consideration of physical and cultural heritage when assessing environmental impacts. The requirements to consider environmental effects on physical and cultural heritage under CEAA 2012 are outlined in Section 5(1)(c)(ii) and any structure, site or thing that is of historical, archaeological, paleontological or architectural significance is subject to Section 5(1)(c)(iv). The requirement to address environmental effects to cultural heritage is also addressed under Sections 5(2)(b)(ii) and (iii) of CEAA 2012 with Section 19(1) of CEAA 2012 outlining the factors that must be considered in an EA, including potential environmental effects.

2.2 Ontario Heritage Act

The *Ontario Heritage Act* provides a framework for the protection of cultural heritage resources in the province. It gives municipalities and the provincial government powers to protect heritage properties and archaeological sites. The *Ontario Heritage Act* includes two regulations for determining CHVI: O. Reg. 9/06 (as amended by O. Reg. 569/22) and O. Reg. 10/06, Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest of Provincial Significance. O. Reg. 9/06 provides criteria to determine the CHVI of a property at a local level while O. Reg. 10/06 provides criteria to determine if a property has CHVI of provincial significance.

Per O. Reg. 9/06, a property may be designated under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* if it meets two or more of the following criteria:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
4. The property has historical or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.
5. The property has historical or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
6. The property has historical or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.
8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.
9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

2.3 Guidance Documents

The *Technical Guidance for Assessing Physical and Cultural Heritage or any Structure, Site or Thing* provides (Government of Canada 2015) preliminary guidance to address Sections 5(1)(c)(ii)(iv) and 5(2)(b)(ii)(iii) of CEAA 2012.

The MCM is responsible for the administration of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and has developed checklists, information bulletins, standards and guidelines, and policies to support the conservation of Ontario's cultural heritage resources, including built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes, and archaeological sites. For the purpose of this CHER, the MCMs *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties - Heritage Identification & Evaluation Process* (MCM 2014) was used as a guidance document since it provides detailed direction on the application of O. Reg. 9/06.

3.0 Historical Context

3.1 Physiography

The Study Area is situated within the Canadian Shield physiographic region, which consists of a large mass of crystalline Precambrian rock that covers 48 percent (%) of Canada's land surface, extending south from the Northwest Territories and Nunavut into the northern portions of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. Most of the Canadian Shield is forested, with 16% covered by freshwater lakes and Arctic islands. Approximately half of the Canadian Shield is classified as upland, defined by its relative elevation to the Hudson Bay lowlands and interior plains (The Canadian Encyclopedia 2023).

The Study Area is also situated within the Canadian pre-Cambrian peneplain of the Patricia portion of Kenora District characterized as an extensive belt of pre-Cambrian Keewatin greenstones and sediments (Harding 1936). Furthermore, the topography of the Study Area was described by Northwest Archaeological Assessments (2021) as variable, ranging from moderately to steeply sloped bedrock to low, moist sites (2021).

The Study Area is surrounded by and consists of portions of Birch Lake and Springpole Lake. Historically the drainage of the area flowed through Birch Lake to Springpole Lake, to the Cat River and finally to Lake St. Joseph (Harding 1936). On April 9, 1958, however, a tri-party agreement between Canada, Manitoba and Ontario was enacted that authorized the diversion of water from Lake St. Joseph by way of the Root River into Lac Seul in order to provide additional waterpower to hydro-electric facilities on the Winnipeg River (LWCB 1958).

3.2 Indigenous History

In early archaeological syntheses, the pre-contact Indigenous cultures of northern Ontario were often described as isolated and conservative, their ways of life a product of the harsh environment and limited resources. Today, however, archaeologists recognize northern Ontario's cultural history as dynamic, both influenced by and influencing developments to the south and west (Hamilton 2013; Fagan 2019). The following provides a brief overview of the Indigenous history in the boreal forests of the Canadian Shield from the earliest arrivals to the fur trade period at contact with Europeans. In this summary, "culture"—the term archaeologists use to describe a shared material culture that identifies a time period or group—is substituted with "way of life" to reflect the direct Indigenous lineage from those living in the earliest periods to the present day (Julien et al. 2010).

Around 9,500 years ago, hunter-gatherers following the Plano way of life began moving into northern Ontario, following the foraging herds of bison, muskox, moose, elk, caribou and deer, as well as smaller mammals such as muskrat and beaver attracted to the freshwater lakes and tundra grasses left in the wake of the receding Laurentide Ice Sheet. To hunt these animals, the Plano used lance-shaped stone projectile points hafted to wood spears, then used large stone scrapers and knives to cut the meat and bone and clean hides (Hamilton 2013). Plano-type tools are remarkably similar across large areas, although there are local variations identified in northern Ontario called the Lakehead and Interlakes Composite complexes (Hamilton 2013; Langford 2018). The few known Plano sites suggest these people were highly mobile and favoured lakeshores or the high ground near rivers (Hamilton 2013).

As people following the Plano way of life grew familiar with their surroundings around 8,000 years ago, they developed local adaptations known as the Archaic way of life. In northern Ontario, the Archaic toolkit was originally thought to represent a unique "Shield Archaic" culture descended from Plano people moving south from present-day Nunavut, but today the Archaic way of life on the Canadian Shield is understood to have been influenced from developments to the south and may not be that different from other Archaic lifeways (Wright 1972a; Hamilton 2013; Langford 2018; Fagan 2019). However, Shield Archaic remains a

useful label because it typifies the larger developments in the Archaic. Like their Plano ancestors, Shield Archaic people lived in widely dispersed bands of hunter-gatherers, but their local knowledge meant they could restrict their annual round to a smaller area and both their economy and material culture were more diverse (Fagan 2019). Archaic projectile points became shorter through time and were made with distinctive side-notches, and there were a range of single- and double-bladed stone knives, endscrapers and sidescrapers (Clark 1991). Whetstones and adzes suggest Archaic people were shaping bone and wood, respectively, and the presence of archaeological sites on islands and along waterways suggests people were using snowshoes and watercraft (McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004).

Another key development during the Archaic in Ontario's north was copper mining and manufacture. As early as 6,000 years ago Archaic people had found copper sources in the upper Great Lakes and used this copper to create implements such as socketed lance heads and knives, adzes and fishhooks, as well as decorative items such as bracelets and disc pendants (Wright 1972b, Hamilton 2013; Langford 2018;). Copper was also widely traded, with some making its way to the Indian Knoll Archaic site in Kentucky (Fagan 2019).

People living in northern Ontario adopted ceramics around 2,200 years ago, during what is known in southern Ontario as the Middle Woodland Period (Hamilton 2013). Despite this marked shift in material culture, known as the Laurel tradition, archaeologists have not found evidence that pottery made a major impact to those continuing an Archaic way of life across most of the region (McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004). The same is true of the bow and arrow, which first appear on Laurel tradition sites; it is unclear whether archery was a distinctly Laurel hunting adaptation or practised much earlier but the bone and wood used to make bows and arrows have fully decomposed in the boreal forest conditions (Clark 1991).

Yet for those living immediately west of Lake Superior, adopting pottery does appear to have caused a substantial shift in their economic and spiritual existence. In addition to greater reliance on foraging plants such as wild rice, the Laurel way of life as it developed into the Late Woodland Period included farming maize, establishing extensive trade networks, and building large ceremonial burial mounds that may have been influenced by the Hopewell culture far to the south (Hamilton 2013).

The Late Woodland way of life in the Canadian Shield of northern Ontario is defined by changes in pottery types, which are assumed correspond to the linguistic and cultural diversity seen in the contact and post-contact periods (McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004; Hamilton 2013). Found across the Shield in the upper Great Lakes and into Manitoba are Blackduck ceramics, thought to have developed from the Laurel way of life and used by the ancestors of the Anishinaabeg. Farther north is Selkirk type pottery, used by people who would become known as Cree (McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004). However, these direct lineages are complicated by Sandy Lake pottery found overlapping the Blackduck area, which is thought to have been made by Siouan speaking people, sites in northern Ontario found with both Blackduck and Selkirk wares, sites in the northeast with Huron and other Iroquoian pottery, or ancestral Cree sites that lack pottery altogether (Conway 1981; McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004; Hamilton 2013).

In contrast to earlier ways of life, far more material evidence survives from the Late Woodland way of life and includes not only hunting tools such as barbed bone harpoons but also stone pipes and amulets with imagery linked to religion (McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004). In the Blackduck (known at contact as Anishinaabeg) way of life, religious beliefs are also reflected in the low burial mounds found west of Lake Superior and the pictographs created in red ochre on numerous rock outcrops across northern Ontario (Ministry of Culture and Recreation 1980; Conway 1981; McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004).

At contact with Europeans in the 17th century, the Anishinaabeg had a varied diet of moose, deer, bear, numerous fish species, and plant foods such as maple sap, berries, and wild rice (McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004). To access these resources Anishinaabe were seasonally mobile, and this mobility influenced the form

and materials of their lightweight “wigwam” housing and development of birchbark canoes (McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004). As European commercial interests in northern Ontario expanded into the 18th century, the Anishinaabeg way of life pivoted to trapping, visiting fur trade posts, and adopting European material culture. The fur trade marks a beginning of a substantial shift in the economy of Indigenous communities.

After the British colonial regime gained control of Canada in 1763, treaties were established between the Crown and Indigenous communities for lands across Ontario (Ferris 2009). It is now recognized that the British—and later Canadian governments—and Indigenous communities had different understandings of these treaties, but they remain legally binding agreements that form the basis of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (Government of Canada 2024). The Project lies within the traditional territories of CLFN, Slate Falls Nation (SFN), Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation (MON) and Lac Seul First Nation (LSFN), and within the Treaty No. 9 area. Other Indigenous communities that may hold historical connection to the area include Ojibway Nation of Saugeen, Pikangikum First Nation, Wabauskang First Nation and members of the Métis Nation of Ontario, Region 1 (Northwest Archaeological Assessments 2021).

Treaty No. 9, also known as the James Bay Treaty, was an agreement signed in 1905 and 1906 between representatives of certain Ojibway (Anishinaabe), Cree (including the Omushkegowuk) and other Indigenous communities (Algonquin) and the Crown (Long 2010; Ministry of Government and Consumer Services 2015).

Between 1905 and 1906, the following Nations signed the Treaty No. 9: Osnaburgh Post (Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation), Fort Hope Post (Eabemetoong First Nation), Marten Falls Post (Ogoki First Nation), Fort Albany Post (Kashechewan First Nation), Moose Factory Post (Moose Cree First Nation), New Post (Taykwa Tagamou First Nation), Abitibi Post (Abitiwinini First Nation, Wahgoshig First Nation), Matachewan Post (Matachewan First Nation), Mattagami Post (Mattagami First Nation), Flying Post (Flying Post First Nation), New Brunswick House Post (New Brunswick House First Nation) and Long Lake Post (Ginoogaming First Nation). The treaty commissioners (Duncan Campbell Scott, Samuel Stewart and Daniel G. MacMartin) spent only a few days with the Nations to select representatives to sign the document. The treaty was only written in English and was explained to the representatives via interpreters. No negotiations took place, and no copies of the document were left with the Nations for review. Treaty No. 9 covers most of present-day Ontario north of the height of land dividing the Great Lakes watershed from the Hudson and James Bay drainage basins (Long 2010; Ministry of Government and Consumer Services 2015).

Despite government efforts at assimilation and settlement through 19th and 20th centuries, many Anishinaabe in northern Ontario continue their traditional land use, cultural and belief practices, and artistic expression.

3.3 Springpole Lake to Birch Lake Travel Route – Landscape History

3.3.1 18th and 19th Century Fur Trading

The Study Area is situated in what was known to early French Traders as Le Petit Nord or the Little North which encompassed fur trade routes to the north and west of Lake Superior. The Little North was bounded on the southwest by the fur trade trunk lines that linked the Lakehead with Lake Winnipeg and to the northwest by the main transport line to Lake Winnipeg from Hudson Bay (Lytwyn 1981).

Traders from the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) came to the Little North by expanding inland from the Albany Fort on James Bay and from Severn House/York Factory on Hudson Bay while the St. Lawrence traders entered via Lake Nipigon. Fur trade competition in the area increased during the 1790s and early 1800s resulting in settlements along the Albany and Severn that later facilitated trade route expansion into the westward flowing rivers of the East Winnipeg Country (Lytwyn 1981; Plate 3-1).

A 1786 map from the HBC Gloucester House Post Journal depicts a trade route between Lake St. Joseph and Lac Seul and depicts the mouth of a river called Crows Nest Lake (Plate 3-2). Two different Crow's Nest Lake are described in John Long's *Voyages and Travels* which is one of the earliest surviving accounts of the Canadian Fur Trade in the Little North.

The first "Crow's Nest Lake" is described by Long as a small lake with "a small island in the middle [...] where the crows build their nests, which is called Cark Cark Minnesey" (Long 1791: 82). Long notes that the fish in this are mostly of the sword-fish kind and describes a long portage from the lake that leads to about "half way [up] a high mountain". (Long 1791: 82). Approximately 30 miles down river from the Lake Long describes the Neesbsbemaince Sakiegan, or the Lake of the Two Sisters which is a "meeting of two currents, which form one: grand discharge into the lake" (Long 1791: 83).

Lytwyn surmises that Lake Arbitibis is associated with the present Lake of the Woods and the Lake of the Two Sisters as the present Tetu Lake located at the junction between the Winnipeg and English Rivers (Lytwyn 1981).

The second "Crow's Nest Lake" is described by Long as follows: "From La grande Côte de la-Roche we proceeded to Lac le Nid ait Corbeau, or Crow's Nest Lake, which is about 200 miles in circumference, supplied by a number of small rivers; there are also several islands on it which furnish the [Indigenous Peoples] with great plenty of wild fowl: bears are also found here in abundance, and a surprising number of beaver dams, running in a crooked direction about ten miles. The Chippeways hunt here, and find a great deal of game" (Long 1791: 106-107).

Lytwyn notes that while this Crow's Nest Lake could not be identified based on the above description, they surmise that it was located between the Wabigoon River and Sturgeon Lakes and concludes based on a review of HBC mapping that 'Crows Next Lake' is present day Springpole Lake (1981).

The name Crows Nest River appears again in subsequent mapping in 1792 and 1816. The 1792 map entitled *Draught between Osnaburgh to Red Lake*, which illustrates routes from Lake St. Joseph to Red Lake and Cat Lake, depicts a Crows Nest Lake from Gull Lake (Plate 3-3). The Osnaburgh House was a HBC post first established on Osnaburgh Lake in 1785 by John Best. The post operated as the "Osnaburgh House" between 1785 until 1962. The post was reopened the following year as the "New Osnaburgh" which remained in operation until 1981 (Government of Manitoba n.d.). During its operations the Osnaburgh House utilized several outposts to support its operations. An 1816 HBC map depicts an outpost labelled as 'Canadian House' on Crow's Nest Lake between Birchind Lake and Gull Lake as outpost of the Osnaburgh House (Plate 3-4; HBC 1816). While the exact location of the Canadian House on Springpole Lake is unknown, Hinshelwood suggested a cabin and portage mapped by Harding in 1936 at the inlet to Springpole Lake from Cromarty Lake as a possible location. However, it should be noted that this conclusion is based on the location rather than any specific documentation (Northwest Archaeological Assessments 2021).

3.3.2 20th Century Mineral Exploration

Large scale mining exploration in Northern Ontario began in the late 19th century when, during the process of blasting rock to construct the transcontinental railway, copper and nickel deposits were discovered in Sudbury (Innis 1934). This was followed with the discovery of major veins of gold in Kirkland Lake and Porcupine and silver in Cobalt (MacDowell 1984).

Mineral exploration of the Birch-Springpole area began in the 1920s and continued until 1945 as a direct result of initial exploration in the Red Lake area, which by 1926 was directed to the areas near Woman Lake, Narrow Lake, and Birch Lake (Harding 1936). During the 1980s, mining / mineral exploration work in the area began again including airborne geophysics, mapping, geochemistry, and ground geophysics. Between 1995 and 2013, diamond drilling commenced at the Springpole Lake property (Ontario Mineral Inventory 2022). In 2015, FMG acquired the property from Gold Canyon Resources, and has continued mineral exploration activities at the property. A Preliminary Economic Assessment report for the Project was filed in 2017 (Ontario Mineral Inventory 2022) and a Preliminary Feasibility Study was published in 2021.

The early-mid 20th century mineral exploration occurring in the general Kenora District yielded geologic maps of the Springpole Lake area. While no reference to the portage route is identified on the available 1906 mineral map, portage routes and trading posts are identified in the general vicinity of the Study Area on Harding's 1936 map (Figure 3-1 and Figure 3-2).

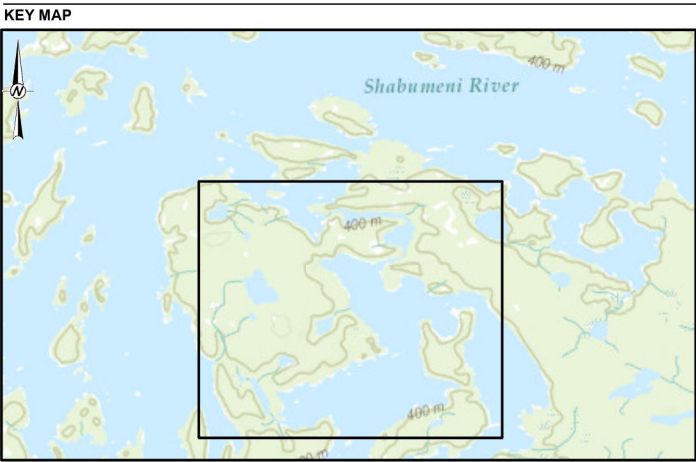
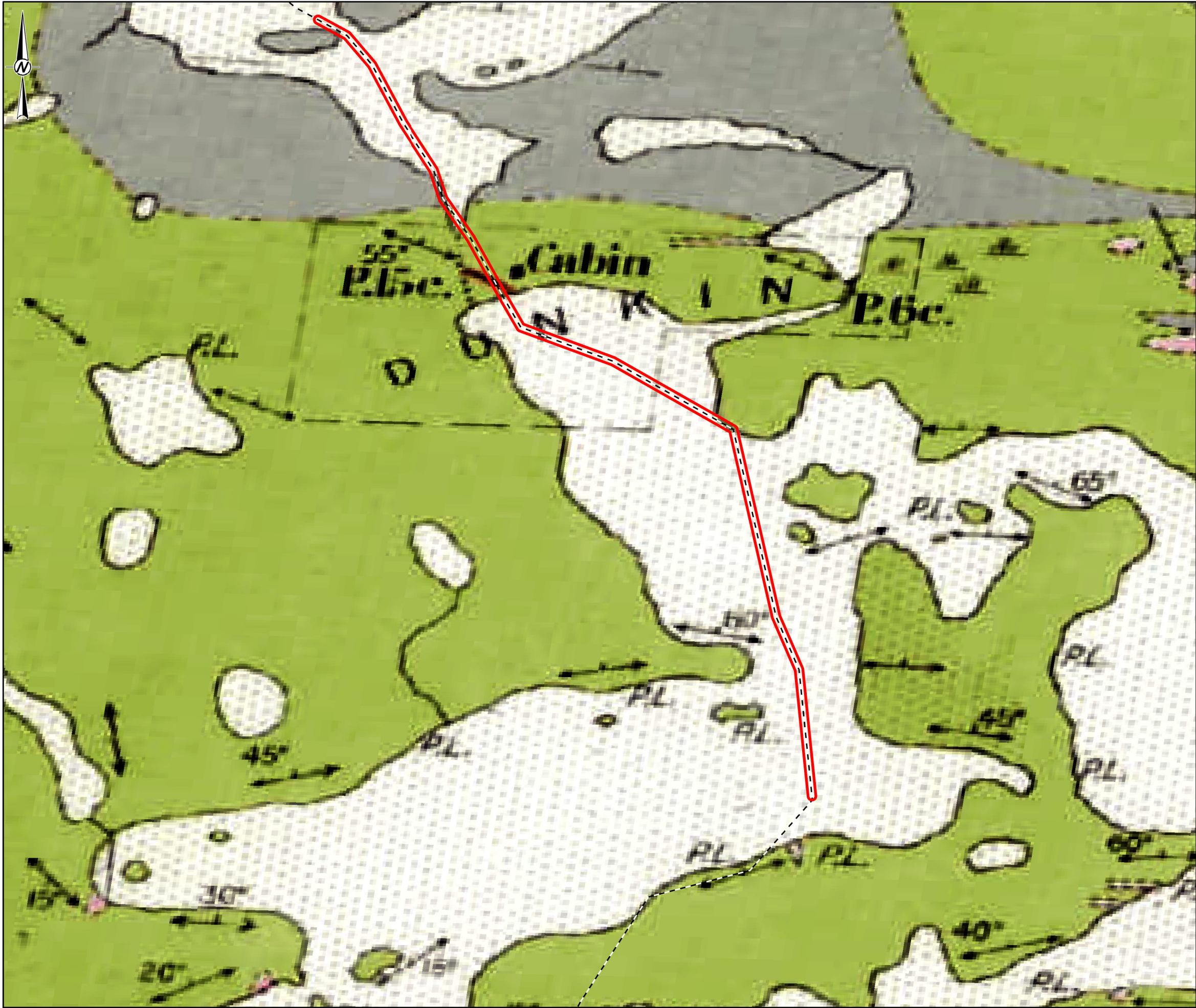
Harding suggests that while there was no mention of it in the early records it is likely that Springpole Lake was travelled by early Canadian explorers, which is consistent with Lytwyn's conclusions.

Harding does confirm that Birch Lake has long been recognized as a travel route between Cat Lake and the English River by Indigenous Peoples (Harding 1936). This is supported by the results of the Traditional Land and Resource Use (TLRU) information detailed in the following section.

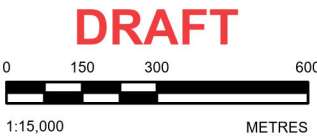
3.3.3 Traditional Land and Resource Use – Springpole Lake to Birch Lake Travel Route

As part of the Project's ongoing Indigenous engagement process, Indigenous communities participating in the EA process were provided the opportunity to provide TLRU information. To date, seven Indigenous communities (CLFN, LSFN, MON, Northwestern Ontario Métis Community [NWOMC], Pikangikum First Nation [PFN], SFN, and Wabauskang First Nation [WFN]) have produced either Indigenous knowledge and land use studies or community land use planning documents (PFN 2006, CLFN/SFN 2011, Morin et al. 2014, MNO 2021, NWES 2020, MON 2023, CLFN 2024, LSFN 2024, SFN 2024). These reports were reviewed during the preparation of this CHER. The following summarizes the land-use practices and perspectives specific to the past and present use of CHR 1 as understood based on current available TLRU:

- A trapline (SL197), held by a member of CLFN, intersects with CHR 1. FMG has worked with the Head Trapper and license holder of the trapline area to reach an agreement to accommodate and to address their concerns and interests. The licence holder (SL197) has submitted a letter of support to IAAC and MECP for the Project.
- The entirety of CHR 1 was identified by CLFN study participants as part of a transportation route (CLFN 2024: Figure 7). CLFN have identified waterway connections and transportation routes as contributing factors to spiritual and cultural landscapes of Indigenous communities and the ability to freely travel between preferred harvesting sites has been identified as a critical component to the continuation TLRU activities such as hunting and trapping (CLFN 2011: 2024).
- LSFN, NWOMC and WFN identified resources and harvesting areas that broadly intersect with CHR 1 however no direct or significant ties with these resource areas and CHR 1 have been noted at present.



LEGEND
Study Area



NOTE(S)
1. ALL LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE

REFERENCE(S)
1. CONTAINS INFORMATION LICENSED UNDER THE OPEN GOVERNMENT LICENCE - ONTARIO
2. IMAGERY CREDITS: WORLD TOPOGRAPHIC MAP: ESRI CANADA, ESRI, HERE, GARMIN, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS, AAFC, NRCAN
3. COORDINATE SYSTEM: NAD 1983 UTM ZONE 15N

CLIENT FIRST MINING GOLD			
PROJECT SPRINGPOLE LAKE TO BIRCH LAKE TRAVEL ROUTE CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION REPORT			
TITLE 1936 ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF MINES MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA			
	CONSULTANT	YYYY-MM-DD	2024-10-24
	DESIGNED	----	
	PREPARED	####	
	REVIEWED	----	
	APPROVED	----	
PROJECT NO. ONS2104	CONTROL 0001	REV. A	FIGURE 3-2

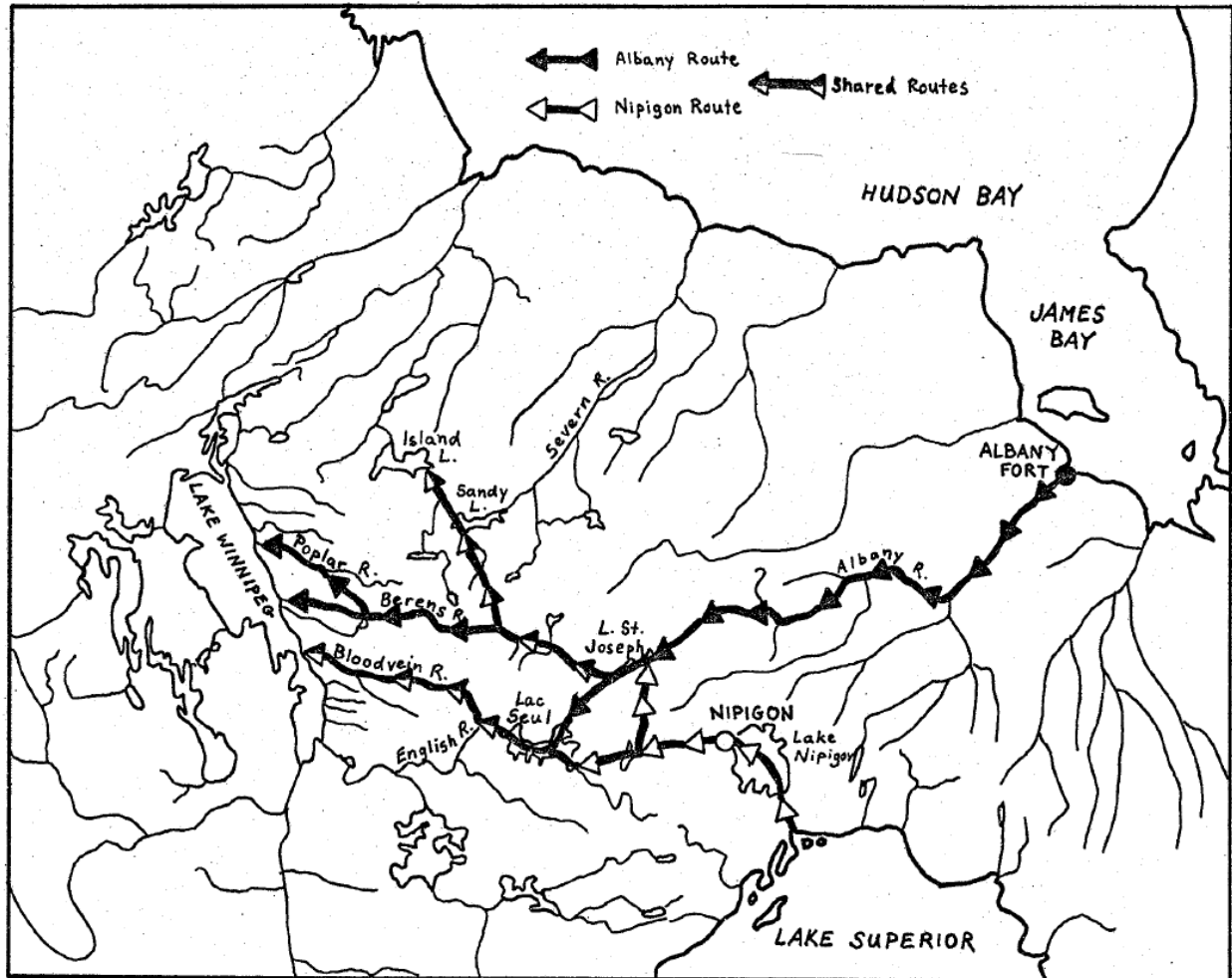


Plate 3-1: Albany and Nipigon Trade Routes to East Winnipeg as Defined by Lytwyn (1981)

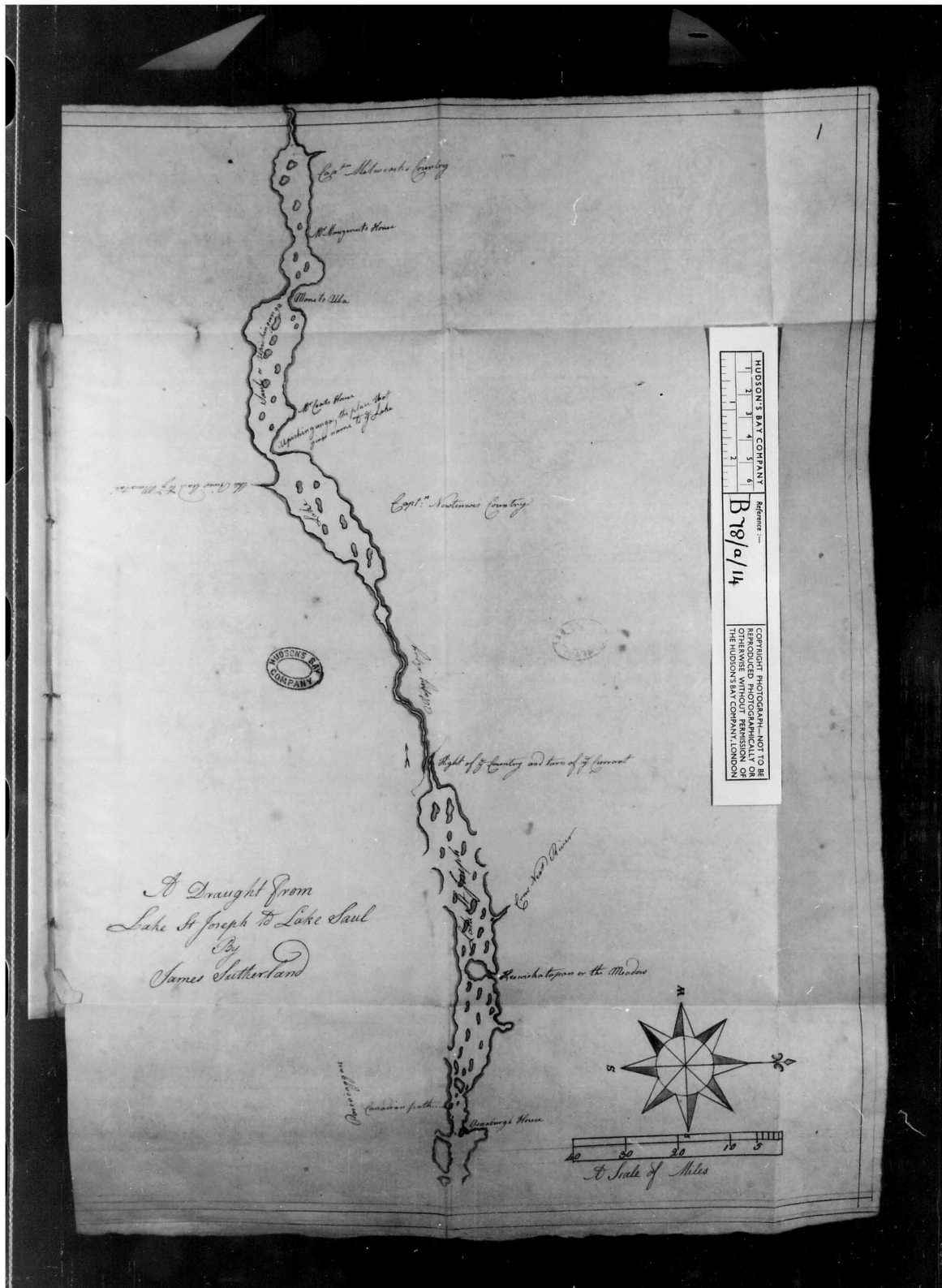


Plate 3-2: 1787 Map from the HBC Gloucester House Post Journal Showing Travel Route Between Lac Seul and Lake St. Joseph Noting Crow's Nest River (HBC 1786)

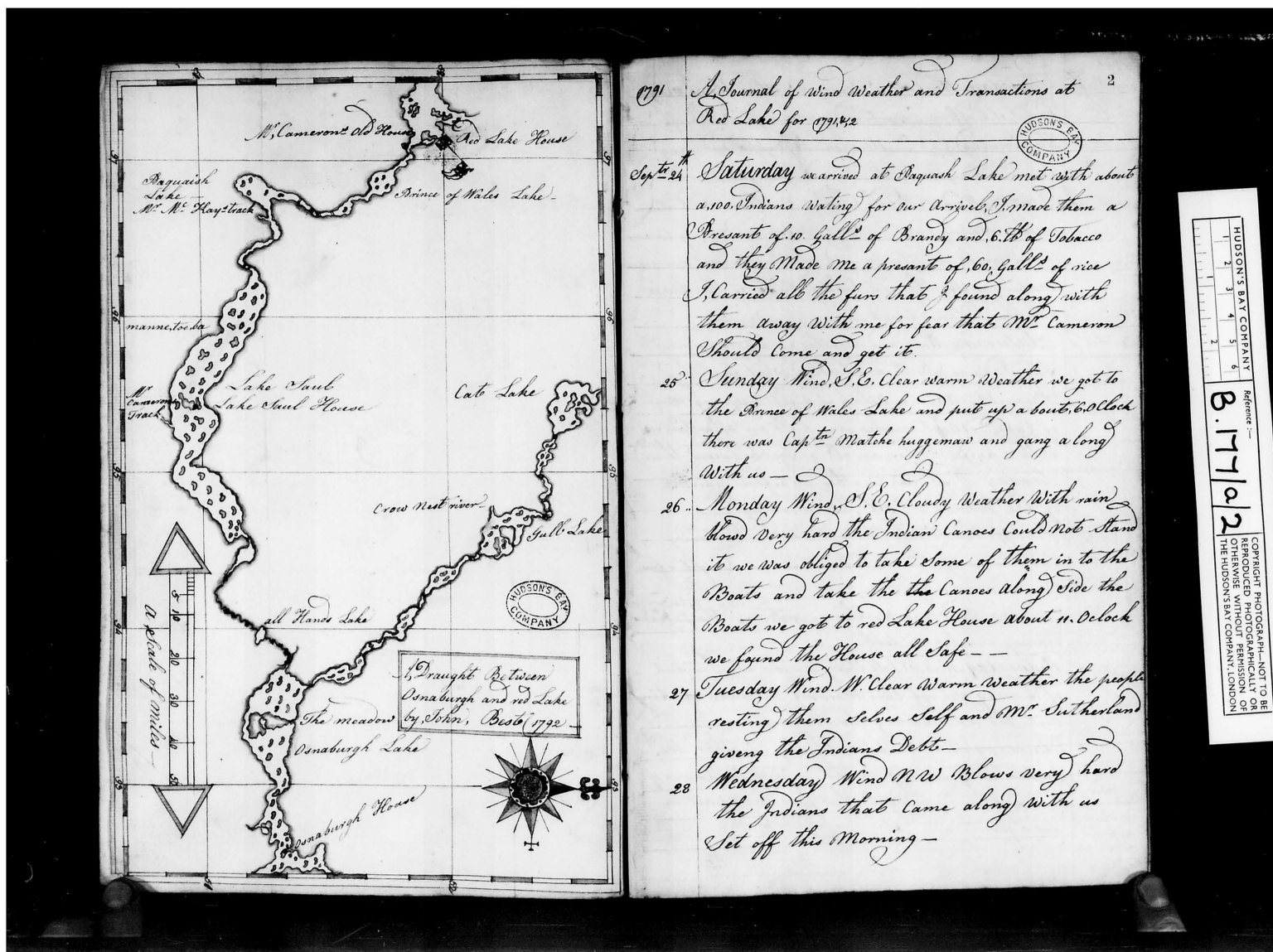


Plate 3-3: 1792 Map from the HBC Red Lake Post Journal Showing Crow's Nest River, the Modern Birch River, Leading to Springpole Lake (HBC 1792)

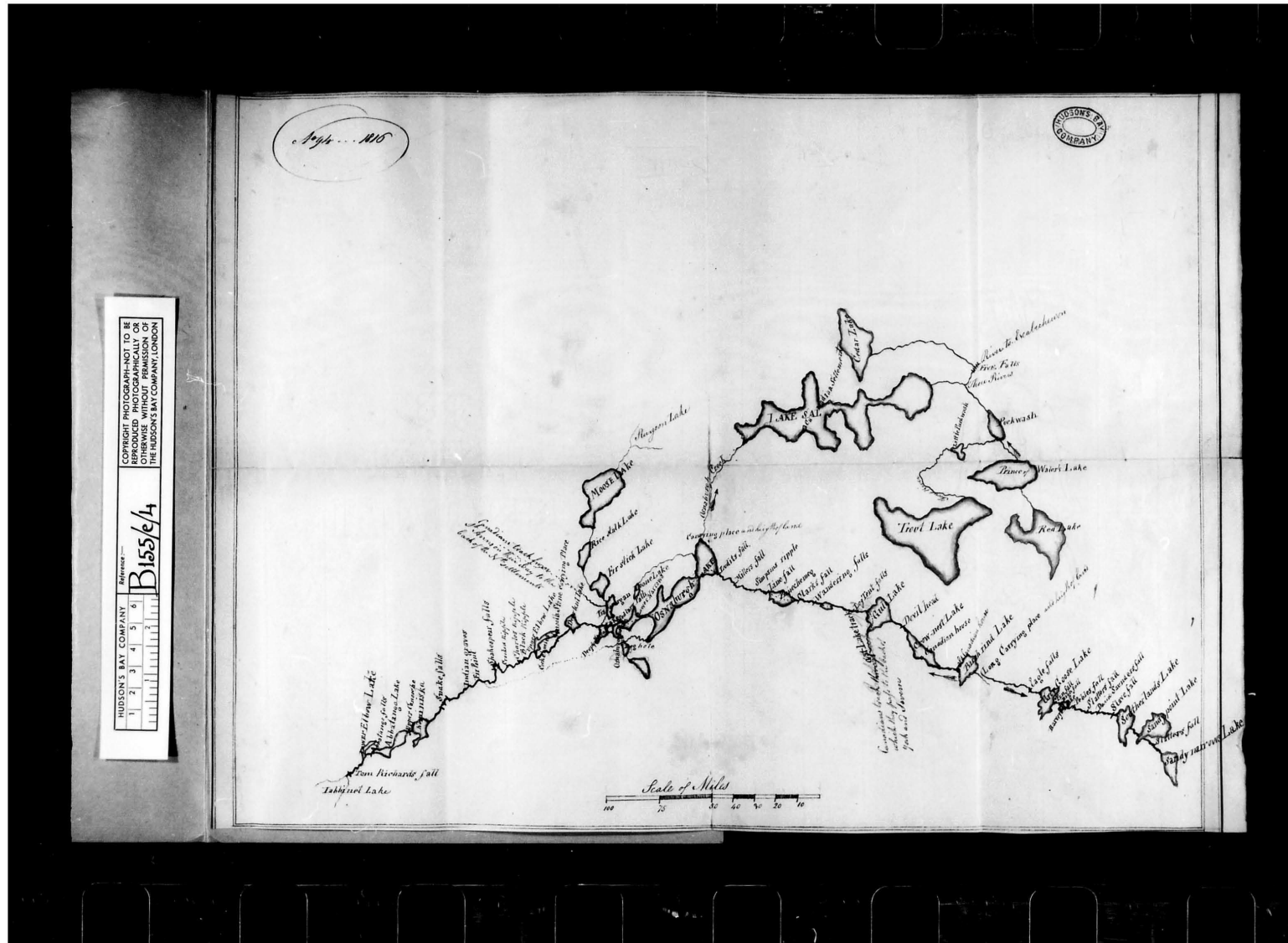


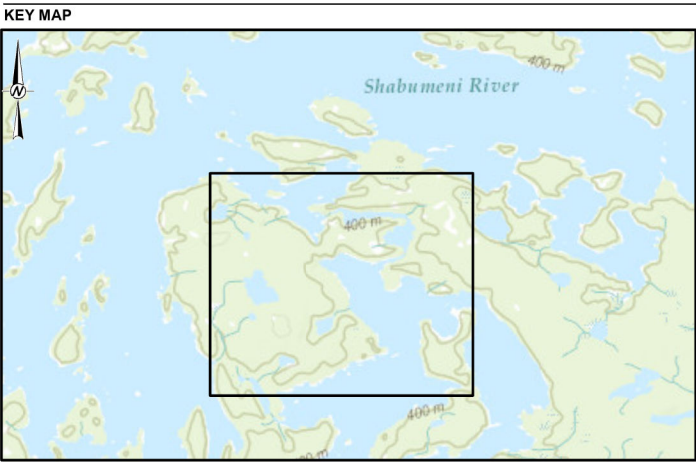
Plate 3-4: 1816 Map from HBC Osnaburg House Report on the District Showing "Canadian House" at Crow's Nest Lake, Interpreted by Lytwyn as Springpole Lake (HBC 1816)

4.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following description of the subject property is based on a field survey conducted from August 20th to 21st, 2023, by Robert Pinchin and Chelsea Dickinson, both Cultural Heritage Specialists with WSP. Detailed mapping of the existing conditions can be found in Figure 4-1.

4.1 Description of Study Area

The Study Area features a portage from Birch Lake and a second from Springpole Lake connected by informal circulation pathways currently maintained by FMG (Plate 4-1 to Plate 4-8). The Portage is marked by two contemporary signs installed by FMG constructed of common materials (Plate 4-3 and Plate 4-7). The Study Area is approximately 200 m east of the Springpole Lake exploration camp operated by FMG which is accessible from the active exploration site that intersects the middle of the Study Area and is generally bound by Springpole Lake to the south, Birch Lake to the north and thick forest to the east and west with mixed vegetation (Plate 4-9).



- LEGEND**
- Study Area
 - - - Travel Route (CHR 1)
 - Portage Location
 - Springpole Mining Exploration Camp



NOTE(S)
1. ALL LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE

REFERENCE(S)
1. CONTAINS INFORMATION LICENSED UNDER THE OPEN GOVERNMENT LICENCE - ONTARIO
2. AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY FIRST MINING GOLD, 2020.
3. KEY MAP: WORLD TOPOGRAPHIC MAP: ESRI CANADA, ESRI, HERE, GARMIN, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS, AAFC, NRCAN
IMAGE:
4. COORDINATE SYSTEM: NAD 1983 UTM ZONE 15N

CLIENT
FIRST MINING GOLD

PROJECT
SPRINGPOLE LAKE TO BIRCH LAKE TRAVEL ROUTE CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION REPORT

TITLE
EXISTING CONDITIONS

CONSULTANT	YYYY-MM-DD	2024-10-24
	DESIGNED	----
	PREPARED	####
	REVIEWED	----
	APPROVED	----

PROJECT NO.	CONTROL	REV.	FIGURE
ONS2104	0001	A	4-1



Plate 4-1: View of Birch Lake Facing North from the Portage from Springpole Lake



Plate 4-2: View of Informal Circulation Path with Contemporary Cign Identifying the Informal Circulation Path as the Portage to Springpole Lake.



Plate 4-3: Close up View of Contemporary 'Portage to Springpole Lake' Sign

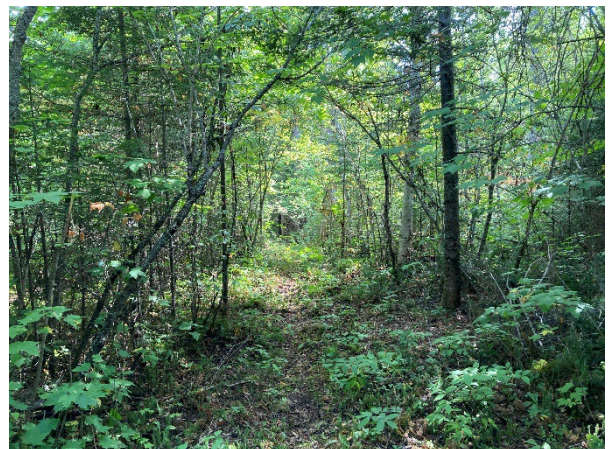


Plate 4-4: View of Maintained Informal Circulation Path



Plate 4-5: View of Springpole Lake Facing South from the Portage from Birch Lake



Plate 4-6: View of Informal Circulation Path with Contemporary Sign Identifying the Informal Circulation Path as the Portage to Birch Lake.



**Plate 4-7: Close up View of Contemporary
'Portage to Birch Lake' Sign**



**Plate 4-8: View of Maintained Informal
Circulation Path with 'Portage to Birch Lake'
Sign**



**Plate 4-9: View of Informal Circulation Pathways to the Portages, taken from an Exploration Trail
Connected to the Springpole Lake Exploration Camp.**

5.0 INFORMATION GATHERING AND ENGAGEMENT

In 2022, the Ontario Heritage Trust, MCM, Ministry of Mines and Ministry of Natural Resources were contacted to gather information on known heritage properties within, and adjacent to, the Cultural Heritage Study Area for the Project, which included the Springpole Lake to Birch Lake travel route.

The MCM reported that there are no properties designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* within, or adjacent to, the Cultural Heritage Study Area for the Project.

At the time of writing, this CHER no response was received from the Ontario Heritage Trust, Ministry of Mines or Ministry of Natural Resources however it should be noted that these ministries have reviewed and provided comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement /EA including the Cultural Heritage Report.

Additional information gathering letters were prepared as part of this CHER and distributed to the Ontario Heritage Trust, MCM, and the Recreation and Heritage Department of Sioux Lookout to gather local perspectives on the potential historical or contextual significance of CHR 1.

The Ontario Heritage Trust has confirmed there are no properties subject to a Trust easement or Trust ownership in the Study Area and, as the Study Area is not located in an organized township, there are no records to indicate it is designated under Part IV or Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The MCM has confirmed there are no provincial heritage properties within or adjacent to the Study Area. The recreation and heritage department of Sioux Lookout confirmed that the Study Area falls outside the Sioux Lookout Municipal boundaries and that they have no information or knowledge of any associated cultural heritage value.

The Recreation and Heritage Department of Sioux Lookout has confirmed that the Study Area falls outside the Sioux Lookout municipal boundaries and the department has no information or knowledge of any associated cultural heritage value.

As part of the Project, FMG has undertaken coordinated consultation activities required by the provincial and federal EA processes to maximize opportunities for engagement with Indigenous communities, government agencies, and stakeholders. In striving to take a meaningful approach to consultation. FMG has provided capacity support for Indigenous communities to complete thorough Project-specific TKLU studies to gather their feedback on culturally important areas. As described in Section 3.3, CLFN, LSFN, MON, NWOMC, PFN, SFN, and WFN have all produced Project-specific Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Studies.

A brief summary of the results of this coordinated consultation as it pertains to CHR 1 and TLRU is summarized in Section 3.3.3. As part of this coordinated consultation, CLFN identified CHR 1 as part of a transportation route (CLFN 2024).

6.0 EVALUATION

6.1 Ontario Regulation 9/06

The Study Area was evaluated against O. Reg 9/06 (as amended by O. Reg. 569/22) to determine whether CHR 1 has CHVI at a local level. If a property meets one or more of the criteria in O. Reg. 9/06, it is eligible for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Table 6-1 presents the evaluation outcome for the Study Area.

Table 6-1: O. Reg 9/06 Evaluation

Criteria	Outcome	Rationale
1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	No	The Study Area features two contemporary signs installed by FMG constructed of common materials identifying the Birch Lake and Springpole Lake portage route. No other built elements exist. Accordingly, the Study Area is not considered to be a rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	No	The Study Area features two contemporary signs installed by FMG constructed of common materials identifying the Birch Lake and Springpole Lake portage route. No other built elements exist. Accordingly, the Study Area is not considered to display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.	No	The Study Area features two contemporary signs installed by FMG constructed of common materials identifying the Birch Lake and Springpole Lake portage route. No other built elements exist. Accordingly, the Study Area was not found to demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
4. The property has historical or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.	YES	The depiction of portages within CHR 1 on the 1936 <i>Forty-Fifth Annual Report of the Ontario Department of Mines 1936 Part IV</i> map suggests that the Study Area has been utilized as a method of travel between Birch Lake and Springpole Lake since at least the early 20th century. Located within the Little North, historical mapping from the HBC suggests that Springpole Lake was the site of 'Canadian House' an outpost of the Osnaburgh House HBC Post and part of the fur trade routes north and west of Lake Superior. The exact location of the 'Canadian House' is unknown. The results of background research and consultation with Indigenous communities completed as part of the Project to date have confirmed that the Study Area was utilized historically by Indigenous Peoples as a travel route between Springpole Lake and Birch Lake and is currently be utilized by CLFN to support TLRU activities including the harvesting of wildlife and aquatic species.
5. The property has historical or associative value because it yields or has the potential to yield information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.	YES	The Study Area has the potential to yield information that contributes to the past and present understanding of TLRU activities and the subsistence, recreation, and socioeconomics of CLFN given the interaction with known TLRU and commercial harvesting activities.

Criteria	Outcome	Rationale
6. The property has historical or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.	No	The Study Area has not been found to be associated with any architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community. Accordingly, the Study Area does not meet this criterion.
7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	YES	The Study Area has been identified as a transportation route supporting the TLRU and commercial harvesting activities of CLFN. CLFN study participants have identified the ability to freely travel between preferred harvesting sites as a critical component to the continuation TLRU activities such as hunting and trapping. Accordingly, the loss of such a landscape has the potential to impact individuals who actively utilize this landscape and the transmission of knowledge across generations.
8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	YES	The Study Area has contextual value because it is historically associated within a well-known travel route and that has been utilized since at least the early 20th century. Additionally, it is functionally utilized by CLFN to support TLRU and commercial activities.
9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark, O. Reg. 9/06, s.1 (2).	No	While the Study Area is associated with a known portage route, the Study Area is surrounded by large water bodies and heavily foliage with no easily discernable markers and therefore is not considered to be a landmark.

6.2 Results of the Cultural Heritage Evaluation

The preceding evaluation has determined that the Study Area has CHVI since it meets four O. Reg. 9/06 criteria for its historical or associative value and contextual value. Based on this evaluation, a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (SCHVI) was prepared in the following section.

7.0 STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE¹

7.1 Description of the Property

The Springpole Lake to Birch Lake travel route is approximately 11.6 hectares in size extending from Springpole Lake (south) to Birch Lake (north), in the unorganized District of Kenora Ontario and comprised of a portage/travel route which has been utilized since at least the early 20th century. The portage/travel routes intersects with an active exploration site with infrastructure and heavy equipment.

7.2 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The historical/associative value of the landscape is related to its direct association with CLFN as a travel route supporting current and historical TLRU activities including the harvesting of wildlife and aquatic species. In addition, historical mapping from the Hudson Bay Company suggests an outpost of the Osnaburgh House was located on Springpole Lake and the travel route utilized as part of the fur trade routes north and west of Lake Superior during the 18th and 19th centuries.

The contextual value of the landscape is related to its potential to yield information on the historic and contemporary understanding of the TLRU activities, subsistence, recreation, and socioeconomics of CLFN .

7.2.1 Heritage Attributes

Heritage attributes that contribute to the ***historical or associative and contextual value*** of the landscape includes:

- Resource area for the harvesting and trapping of aquatic species in Birch Lake and Springpole Lake by CLFN such as:
 - Walleye/Pickrel,
 - Northern Pike,
 - Lake Trout,
 - Lake Whitefish, and
 - Lake Sturgeon
- Portage connecting the Birch Lake and Springpole Lake waterbodies which supports TLRU for CLFN and commercial activities for one trapline holder from CLFN.

¹ WSP recognizes that Indigenous consultation completed as part of this Project is ongoing. Accordingly, this SCHVI and the associated Heritage Attributes reflects the information available to date. Should additionally information become available this SCHVI should be updated to reflect this information.

8.0 MITIGATION AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on historical background research, community engagement, and the property inspection, it has been determined that CHR 1 meets the criteria for CHVI prescribed in O. Reg. 9/06 (as amended by O. Reg 569/22) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for historical/associative and contextual reasons. Therefore, the following conclusions are made:

1. Acknowledging FMG's ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities as part of the EA process, the results of this Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report will be included as part of the final Environmental Impact Statement / Environmental Assessment submission to the federal and provincial government and will be circulated to those Indigenous communities participating in the EA process.
2. It is anticipated that the Project will impact CHR 1. Accordingly, the preparation of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required to meet the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The HIA should be prepared during detailed design prior to construction and assess the impacts of the proposed work, identify conservation strategies, and recommend mitigation measures. The HIA should consider the selection of an alternative portage site, as identified through engagement with Cat Lake First Nation (CLFN) during the EA process, as a preferred mitigative strategy.

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