



University
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

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**“Governance of Protected Areas: Sharing Power and Decision-Making at
Pukaskwa National Park and Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area”**

Department of Geography

Friday, September 23, 2016
10:30am
David Turpin Building
Room B215

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Philip Dearden, Department of Geography, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. Rosaline Canessa, Department of Geography, UVic (Member)
Dr. Rick Rollins, Department of Geography, UVic (Member)
Dr. Michael M’Gonigle, School of Environmental Studies, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Robert Payne, Human Dimensions Associates, Lakehead University

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Brian Starzomski, School of Environmental Studies, UVic

Abstract

Protected Areas (PAs) are one effective means to address biodiversity loss. Unfortunately, the history of PA establishment includes forced removal of people from lands that become parks and restrictions on access and use of lands and waters by local people. Relationships between PA managers, stakeholders, including local people, remain in many instances, difficult. This challenges the ability to create new PAs in Canada, where consent by local residents and other stakeholders is critical for PA establishment.

This research examines governance of PAs as a means to improve relationships between PA authorities and local communities. Determining how much power communities wish to have over decision-making and their preferred methods for sharing power permits greater understanding of how to build relationships with communities, stakeholders and partners that are respectful, trustworthy and sustainable.

Pukaskwa National Park and Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) both in Northwestern, Ontario on the North Shore of Lake Superior, were studied along with their relationships to the nearby communities of Marathon and Terrace Bay, respectively. Pukaskwa, has been present on the landscape for over thirty years, while Lake Superior NMCA is in the process of establishment. The proximity of the PAs to each other and the communities to the PAs, along with the evolution of the respective guiding legislations, offered uniquely complex circumstances to investigate.

A mixed methods approach to the research was employed involving the analysis of 190 community surveys and oral interviews with members of Town Councils from both communities. Few studies in Canada have examined governance of PAs and no study has examined governance of federally PAs in Northern Ontario.

The results indicate that residents of the communities of Marathon and Terrace Bay, support the purposes of the PAs and multiple means of communicating with them about decisions made about the PAs. Clearly favouring the involvement of local people in decision-making about the PAs, respondents also recognized the importance of involving PA staff and scientists in decision-making. Visitors to Pukaskwa were also found to be important to decision-making.

The findings further show that community members are resolute that Parks Canada have some control over decision-making. Marathon residents are comfortable with less collaboration and power sharing with Parks Canada than are residents of Terrace Bay.

The results are sentinel to achieving approaches to citizen involvement in decisionmaking about PAs in ways that are meaningful to local residents. Achieving local support for PAs secures an option for governments to use that is critical to addressing biodiversity loss, important for improving human health and maintaining society's connection to nature.