Webequie Supply Road Project

Webequie First Nation

January 9, 2026

AtkinsRéalis Ref: 661910

APPENDIX T: STAGE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

AtkinsRéalis

WSR WEBEQUIE SUPPLY ROAD

WEBEQUIE FIRST NATION

Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment
Webequie Supply Road
Webequie First Nation and District of Kenora, Ontario

Original Report

Prepared for:

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Archaeological Licence: P380 (Cooper)
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Executive Summary

Archaeological Services Inc. was contracted by AtkinsRéalis Canada Inc., on behalf of Webequie First Nation, to conduct a Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment (Background Research) as part of the Webequie Supply Road Project (the Project), in Webequie First Nation and the District of Kenora, Ontario. The Study Area for the Stage 1 assessment includes the Recommended Preferred Route and temporary and permanent supportive infrastructure (e.g., aggregate areas, construction camps, access roads, Maintenance and Storage Facility). The Stage 1 considers the Local Study Area, a one-kilometre buffer from the recommended route centreline, and the Regional Study Area, a five-kilometre buffer from the Local Study Area. A Stage 1 Impact Assessment Report will be completed to assess the preferred route and supportive infrastructure (e.g., access roads, construction camps, laydown sites, and aggregate extraction areas) within a proposed 35-metre right-of-way, once selected. The project is being led entirely by Webequie First Nation.

The Stage 1 Background Research report found that only one previously registered archaeological site (FeIn-1) is located within the RSA near the Muketei River. A review of the Land Use Plans and Indigenous Knowledge studies from Webequie First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation, and Weenusk First Nation indicated that there are 39 features of cultural significance from these studies which indicate archaeological potential within the LSA. In accordance with S & G Section 2.1.5 *Alternative Strategies for Special Survey Conditions: Test Pit Survey in Northern Ontario and on Canadian Shield Terrain* parts of the LSA require Stage 2 survey.

Below is a summary of the recommendations:

1) Part of the LSA exhibits high archaeological potential within 50 metres of modern water sources. These areas require Stage 2 test pit survey at five metre intervals, prior to any proposed construction impacts, in accordance with S&Gs Section 2.1.5 Standard 1;

2) Part of the LSA exhibits high archaeological potential within 150 metres of features of archaeological potential as identified in the Indigenous

Knowledge studies. These areas require Stage 2 test pit survey, prior to any proposed construction impacts, in accordance with S&Gs Section 2.1.5 Standard 2;

3) Parts of the LSA are within pockets of well-draining soil surrounded by rockland and exhibit archaeological potential. These areas require Stage 2 test pit survey, prior to any proposed construction impacts, in accordance with S&Gs Section 1.3.3 Standard 2;

4) Part of the LSA does not retain archaeological potential on account of disturbance from the construction of the existing roadways, airport, and Eagle's Nest Mine area. However, these areas retain archaeological potential until a property inspection is carried out to confirm the extent of disturbance.

5) The remainder of the LSA is located in presumed permanently saturated soils of swampy wetlands and exhibit low archaeological potential. These areas retain archaeological potential until a property inspection is carried out to confirm the extent of the swamps and to locate the shorelines;

    a) Parts of these permanently saturated areas of low archaeological potential are also considered remote and inaccessible and Stage 2 survey is not required for these areas under the S & G Section 1.3.4;

6) If impacts to lakebeds or riverbeds are proposed, archaeological potential must be evaluated following the MCM's *Criteria for Evaluating Marine Archaeological Potential* checklist;

7) Should the proposed work extend beyond the current Study Area, further Stage 1 archaeological assessment should be conducted to determine the archaeological potential of the surrounding lands.

Project Personnel

- **Senior Project Manager**: Martin S. Cooper, MA (P380), Senior Archaeologist, Senior Manager, Northern Ontario Projects
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Disclaimer

Due to potential sensitivity and confidentiality of some features referred to in this report of the EAR/IS, mapping or locations of such features have been redacted

1.0 Project Context

Archaeological Services Inc. (ASI) was contracted by AtkinsRéalis Canada Inc., on behalf of Webequie First Nation (WFN), to conduct a Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment (Background Research) as part of the Webequie Supply Road Project (the Project), in WFN and the District of Kenora, Ontario.

WFN is proposing the development of an all-season road between the community and the Ring of Fire mineral deposit area. It will serve as a supply road to facilitate the year-round movement of supplies, materials, and people from the WFN and its airport to existing mineral exploration activities and proposed future mine developments in the McFaulds Lake area (also referred to as the Ring of Fire).

The proposed project corridor is located in northwestern Ontario, with the WFN being located approximately 525 kilometres northeast of Thunder Bay. The corridor is to extend southeastward for 51 kilometres from the WFN community, before turning eastward for 56 kilometres and terminating at the Ring of Fire mineral deposit area near McFaulds Lake. A total of 17 kilometres of the proposed project corridor sits within WFN Reserve Lands under federal jurisdiction. The remainder of the Project corridor sits on unsurveyed Ontario Crown Lands.

The Webequie Supply Road is a proposed two-lane all-season road within a cleared right-of-way of 35 metres in width and 107 kilometres in length. The proposed road right-of-way will necessitate constructing bridges over major waterbody crossings including, from east to west, Winisk Lake, Unnamed Tributary of Winisk River, and Muketei River, and a variety of culvert types and sizes will also be placed to convey more minor watercourses under the proposed Supply Road. The project will also include supportive infrastructure such as aggregate pits/quarries, construction camps, and other supportive site facilities located as close as possible to the supply road corridor.

The Stage 1 Study Area (Figure 1) includes: proposed Webequie Supply Road footprint, or right-of-way boundary of the preliminary recommended preferred route, and the footprint of temporary or permanent supportive infrastructure; the Local Study Area (LSA) which is a one-kilometre buffer from the proposed

Webequie Supply Road footprint, or right-of-way boundary of the preliminary recommended preferred route, and 500-metre buffer from the footprint of temporary or permanent supportive infrastructure; and the Regional Study Area (RSA), which is a five-kilometre buffer from the LSA.

Background information and historical land use research was conducted for the larger RSA, while the assessment of archaeological potential has been conducted within the more refined LSA. This LSA has been defined as inclusive of those lands that may contain archaeological resources that may be subject to direct impacts as a result of the proposed undertaking. Lands within the study area are located within the traditional territory of WFN and within the District of Kenora. See Appendix A for mapping of the Project location and components.

All activities carried out during this assessment were completed in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act* (1990, as amended in 2024) and the 2011 *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (S & G), administered by the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (MCM 2011).

1.1 Development Context

All work has been undertaken as required by the *Environmental Assessment Act, RSO 1990* (Environmental Assessment Act, R.S.O. c. E.18, 1990 as amended 2024), the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, and the *Impact Assessment Act,* and regulations made under these Acts, and are therefore subject to all associated legislation.

Authorization to carry out the activities necessary for the completion of the Stage 1 archaeological assessment was granted by AtkinsRéalis Canada Inc., on behalf of WFN, on February 11, 2021.

1.1.1 Treaties and Traditional Territories

The Study Area is within the James Bay Treaty 9, signed on August 9, 1905, between the Government of Canada in the name of King Edward VII and Cree and Ojibway leaders. The treaty was for:

> *"that portion or tract of land lying and being in the province of Ontario bounded on the south by the height of land and the northern boundary of the territory ceded by the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850, and the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850, and bounded on the east and north by the boundaries of the said province of Ontario as defined by law and on the west by a part of the eastern boundary of the territory ceded by the Northwest Angle Treaty No. 3." (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016)*

The purpose of the Treaty was to secure the land for settlement, immigration, trade, travel, mining, and lumbering. Petitions to enter treaty relations also came from Ojibway and Cree north of the already signed Robinson-Superior and Robinson-Huron Treaties of 1850 (Praxis Research Associates, 2005, p. xvii). The Cree agreed to the terms of the treaty and the promise of "Happiness and Prosperity" along with the protection of their hunting, fishing, and land rights; and education for their children and future generations (Moose Cree First Nation, 2015). Ratification of the treaty came in 1907 for the Dominion to approve and confirm the 12 listed reserves (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, 2016).

The Study Area includes Ontario Crown lands and WFN Reserve. As part of the input received through consultation activities conducted to date for this project, Marten Falls First Nation (MFFN) and Neskantaga First Nation have both indicated direct impacts to their traditional territories by the Project; and Attawapiskat First Nation, Weenusk (Peawanuck) First Nation, and Kasabonika Lake First Nation have asserted that they have shared traditional territory with WFN but have not specified as to whether these areas coincide with the Project area. Weenusk First Nation has stated that they have overlapping traditional territory in and around the Winisk River downstream (north) of WFN reserve lands. Kasabonika Lake First Nation has asserted that they share traditional territory with WFN and actively use these lands for hunting and fishing. Attawapiskat First Nation's traditional territory is deemed by Attawapiskat to extend into the Project area by virtue of the community's use of the Attawapiskat River and its subwatershed areas, and Attawapiskat has expressed concerns over potential effects on the "western portion" of their territory (Webequie First Nation, 2020).

Traditional activities of First Nation community members include hunting, fishing, and gathering, as well as cultural and spiritual activities.

1.2 Historical Context

The purpose of this section, according to the S & G, Section 7.5.7, Standard 1, is to describe the past and present land use and the settlement history, and any other relevant historical information pertaining to the Study Area. A summary is first presented of the current understanding of the Indigenous land use of the Study Area. This is then followed by a review of the historical Euro-Canadian settlement history.

1.2.1 Indigenous Land Use and Settlement

Current archaeological evidence indicates that northern Ontario was occupied by human populations much later than the south. The Laurentide glacier would have retreated above the Study Area by approximately 10,500-10,000 before present (B.P.) (Karrow & Warner, 1990, p. Fig 2.9, 2.11). Populations at this time would have been highly mobile, inhabiting a boreal-parkland similar to the modern sub-arctic. By approximately 10,000 B.P., the environment had progressively warmed and populations now occupied less extensive territories (Ellis & Deller, 1990, pp. 62–63).

The archaeological occupation of The Hudson Bay and James Bay Lowlands is just beginning to be understood. Archaeological investigations in the region, which began in the 1980s, have indicated that the area was occupied for millennia prior to the Fur Trade era and dating as least as early as the Archaic period (Julig, 1982; Pilon, 1987). While it is likely that Indigenous occupation was focused on the major river systems, there is no doubt that overland travel between drainage systems was conducted on a regular basis.

In regions north of the Great Lakes, Early Paleo groups were present between 11,000 and 10,000 B.P. Late Paleo settlement, known locally as the Lakehead Complex, may have occurred in the Thunder Bay area immediately following the lowering of the glacial Lake Minong water levels. This initial settlement took place when the climate and vegetation of the area was comparable to that of the

modern sub-arctic. Evidence concerning these people is very limited since populations were not large and since little of the sparse material culture of these nomadic hunters has survived the millennia. Virtually all that remains are the tools and by-products of their sophisticated chipped stone tool industry. During this period, there was a marked preference for lithic raw materials derived directly from bedrock outcrops, rather than from secondary sources such as glacial till. Paleo populations in northwestern Ontario obtained jasper taconite, a distinctive flint-like material with maroon colouring and variegated bands of reddish-brown, from the area of the extensive Cummins quarry site situated in Thunder Bay or one of several sources located in the region.

Given the tundra- or taiga-like environment of the time, and the locations of hunting camps, it has generally been postulated that the Paleo subsistence economy focused on the hunting of large Pleistocene mammals such as mastodon, moose, elk, and especially caribou. Of particular interest in this regard is the frequent location of the larger Paleo sites adjacent to the strandlines of large pro- and post-glacial lakes. This settlement pattern has been attributed to the strategic placement of camps, representing larger population aggregates, in order to intercept migrating caribou herds. This traditional view of Paleo subsistence practices is currently being modified, as it is becoming more apparent that smaller game and fish were also important dietary contributors. Whether Paleo people were dependent on the constantly moving herds or on less communal species, these subsistence strategies would have necessitated that social groups remain relatively small and egalitarian. These highly mobile groups probably moved in seasonal patterns throughout very large territories.

By approximately 8,000 BP, subsistence shifted to an increased reliance on aquatic resources, likely anadromous fish. This is suggested by evidence from isotopic analysis of bone samples from the Wapekeka Burial site (dated to approximately 7,000 BP) (Wright 2001:125). Comparative evidence from the O.S.A Lake site near Georgian Bay suggests that contact existed between populations in north-central Ontario and those in southern Ontario (Wright 2001:123). Such communication networks certainly extended into northern Ontario as well. The Great Lakes basins experienced low-water levels, from 10,000-5,500 BP and many

sites that would have been located on those former shorelines are now submerged.

Between 8,000 and 3,000 B.P., people developed an adaptation to the environment that involved the use of many diverse animal and plant resources. It was during this period that present-day plant and animal communities were becoming established. Exploitation of these resources required being in specific places at certain times of the year (fish spawning areas, moose yards, berry patches, beaver ponds). This resulted in a set pattern of repetitive seasonal movement through a territory. Fishing became a more important part of the subsistence base, and the widespread use of canoes probably developed in this period. The annual subsistence cycle probably involved small interior fall and winter hunting camps which were situated in areas known to be frequented by large game and larger spring and summer settlements which were located near river mouths and lakeshores to exploit rich aquatic resources.

Four distinct Archaic groups are thought to have been present in the Canadian Shield region: Shield Archaic, Old Copper Archaic, Plains Archaic, with Laurentian Archaic known from the eastern limits of the Shield (Lambert, 1983, pp. 14–15). Mid-Archaic climate change resulted in the north-easterly spread of parkland and grassland into eastern Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario. This also brought bison into the area around 7,000 B.P., followed by Plains Archaic groups from Manitoba and Minnesota, leading to a mixing of Shield and Plains Archaic cultural traits (Hamilton, 1981, p. 20). Archaeological evidence reveals active trade across the Northern Plains in Knife River chert from western North Dakota, obsidian, marine shell artifacts, and Great Lakes copper, suggesting an extensive east-west trade route connecting to the Great Lakes region (Eifler, 2011).

By the Late Archaic period, almost every lake and river system in northwestern Ontario had been occupied or traveled across, and human subsistence and settlement patterns were relatively uniform for a long period of time over a large area. Given the length of time encompassed by this cultural period, and the typically small size and short-term occupation of its sites, most Archaic sites manifest themselves as ephemeral lithic scatters that lack diagnostic artifacts. During this time, people began to manufacture objects from native copper, which

was either mined from massive deposits found in the Lake Superior basin or from pure nuggets or float copper found in glacial deposits and stream beds. It was then heated to anneal or soften it and then cold hammered to the desired shape. Copper artifacts from the Lake Superior area are found throughout the Great Lakes area having been an important long distance trade item.

By approximately 2,200 BP, populations focussed their habitation at rivers and lakes, while subsistence involved a variety of resources drawn from a wide territory. At this time, the earliest evidence exists for occupation located near prime fishing grounds. Soon after, burial mounds appear in the archaeological record, and the exotic nature of the grave offerings found associated with these burial mounds expands on the prior evidence for extensive exchange networks (Wright 2001:288, 291-293). Burial practice should be seen as deliberate and reflective of the cosmology of these people (Parker Pearson, 1999, p. 141). All these new cultural features suggest new concepts of social organization, investment of labour and territorialism (Brown, 1995, p. 13; MacDonald et al., 1994, pp. 7–8). The prevalence of mound burial around the Upper Great Lakes reflects likely cultural connections with populations from Ohio and Illinois. There are differences in some burial mound practices in the Shield versus elsewhere in the Great Lakes basin in terms of stone cairn construction versus earthen mound construction. The apparent similarities in ceremonialism, however, as well as the material evidence for extensive cultural contacts across regions may be part of a worldview which spanned the entire Great Lakes basin and likely beyond. Macro-band social organization and subsistence focussed on the seasonal exploitation of resources such as fish and wild rice (where available), though evidence from the Wabinosh River site west of Lake Nipigon may indicate year-round occupation (Wright 1999: 749, 756, 765-776).

Remains from Laurel-period (2,200–1,200 B.P.) archaeological sites show a strong riverine and lake adaptation. The subsistence strategies during this period involved, like the Archaic period, a wide range of faunal and floral resources. Seasonal gatherings of people for subsistence and social purposes began to occur during this period, resulting in the appearance of large settlements at prime fishing locations. A Middlesex burial mound occurs in the Killarney area northeast of Georgian Bay, and later Laurel mounds are known from the Rainy River area of

northwestern Ontario, indicating a strongly developed mortuary practice influenced by the Hopewell groups of the Ohio valley. The grave offerings associated with these burials continued to place an emphasis upon the exotic origin of raw materials. These developments suggest that changes first evidenced in the preceding Early Woodland period continued to develop and be expanded upon.

In northern Ontario, this period saw the addition of pottery and net sinkers to the artifact assemblage. The Laurel artifact assemblage is also characterized by distinctive side notched projectile points, small blade knives, great numbers of scrapers, some bone harpoons, and some use of native copper. Laurel pottery is finely made, thin ware with numerous rows of a variety of stamped patterns decorating the shoulders, necks, and/or collars of the conically shaped vessels.

Sites from this period appear to be more numerous than the previous periods, and the pattern of large seasonal settlements appears to have remained well established from the Middle Woodland period. In northern Ontario, three ceramic traditions predominate during the Late Woodland period. Blackduck ceramics are generally characterized by a variety of cord wrapped object impressions over the whole pot, while Selkirk decorations consist of fabric impressions on the body of the vessel and a variety of decorations between the shoulder and the lip, consisting of cord-wrapped object impressions, incised impressions, punctates and bosses. In addition to these ceramics, the Late Woodland artifact assemblage is characterized by small triangular and side-notched projectile points, use of relatively unmodified greywacke flake or spall tools, flat slate knives, and, towards the end of the period, clay smoking pipes.

Before the European arrival, extensive exchange systems had already developed between the Anishinaabek (Nipissing, Odawa, Ojibway) and Cree of north-central and northeastern Ontario and the Huron-Wendat and other Iroquoian groups to the south. The end of the Late Woodland period in northern Ontario is marked by the appearance of European Trade goods circa 1600 Common Era (CE). Historical documentation provides some information on the populations which lived in northern Ontario during the seventeenth century. The extensive mobility of these populations reflects a different sense of territoriality than the settled agricultural

or even itinerant horticultural groups living to the south and data is often insufficient to accurately map the ranges of individual groups.

1.2.2 First Nation Community Histories

During the first half of the eighteenth century Anishinaabek families lived in small seasonally occupied settlements and camps throughout the upper reaches of the Albany, Winisk, and Attawapiskat River systems. During the fall families would disperse to small hunting camps. In the spring they would travel to their fishing camps on the large lakes joining their extended family and other families where they would remain until the fall. Some families would travel to trade their furs at the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) post situated at the mouth of the Albany River, while others would trade south of the height of land with the Northwest Company posts at Fort William and other interior locations.

After mid-eighteenth century the HBC began to establish inland posts in competition with the rival Northwest Company. Anishinaabek hunters would no longer have to travel long distances to trade. Families began to live in close proximity to the posts, where they could obtain items from the HBC store in exchange for furs. Anishinaabek also provided country food, game, and fish to the HBC in exchange for cloth, flour and sugar. In the second half of the nineteenth century the Catholic and Anglican churches were established in close proximity to the HBC posts. By the end of the nineteenth century more families settled in and around the posts for most of the year. In 1905 when the Treaty 9 Commission travelled to the region to enter into Treaty with the Anishinaabe they planned visits to only Fort Hope and Marten's Falls, both main posts of the HBC. The Anishinaabek assembled at these posts were given band status under the Indian Act and reserve land (Fort Hope and Marten Falls), while those from the surrounding territory did not receive band status or reserve land (Webequie, Nibinamik, Neskantaga, Attawapiskat, Kasabonika and Weenusk). The HBC made arrangements and paid for the Treaty Commissioners visit, while the annuities and gratuities received by the Anishnaabe for entering into the treaty were spent at the HBC stores (Long, 2010). The surrounding communities continued to travel to Fort Hope and Marten Falls to receive annuity payments on treaty day until 1930 when annuities were also paid at Lansdowne House and other Treaty 9 Adhesion bands listed below.

1.2.2.1. Aroland First Nation

Aroland First Nation is an Anishinaabek community located approximately 20 kilometres west of Nakina on Highway 643 and along the Canadian National Railroad. Around 1900, the Aroland settlement was established in close proximity to the Hudson's Bay store. Aroland First Nation ancestors originally came from Eabametoong (Fort Hope), Marten Falls, Ginoogaming (Long Lake 77), which are signatories to Treaty 9, and Long Lake 58 and Fort William First Nations, which are associated with the 1850 Robinson Superior Treaty (Long, 2010). Aroland received First Nation status in 1985. Its current reserve lands extend from Highway 643 to the western and northern shores of Esnagami Lake.

1.2.2.2. Attawapiskat First Nation

Attawapiskat First Nation is a Mushkegowuk Cree community located at the mouth of the Attawapiskat River near James Bay. At the time of the signing of Treaty 9 the Attawapiskat band was included with the Fort Albany band. It was not until 1929 that the Attawapiskat band signed the 1929 Adhesion to Treaty 9. The original reserve granted by the adhesion to Treaty 9 in 1929 is located 150 kilometres inland from the James Bay coast on the Ekwan River. This reserve was hardly if ever occupied by band members (Cummins, 1992, p. 55).

The community developed around the Hudson's Bay Company (H.B.C.) post that was established sometime between circa 1850 and 1900. In 1894, Oblate missionaries established a Catholic church near the H.B.C. post. A second post operated by the Réveillon Frères operated in the early part of the twentieth century until they were bought out by the H.B.C. in the 1930s.

The community consisted of families that hunted, fished, and trapped throughout the Attawapiskat and Ekwan River drainages. During the spring and fall, most Attawapiskat families travelled to the James Bay coast to hunt waterfowl, most significantly, geese. In December, all the families would travel to the settlement to spend Christmas before heading back out to their camps in the interior to hunt and trap.

1.2.2.3. Constance Lake First Nation

Constance Lake First Nation is an Anishinini community located at Pagwa. It was granted band status in 1945. In the 1880s, the community was centred around the Hudson's Bay post at the confluence on the Kenogami River and the Albany River. The community then moved to the English River near Mammamattawa where they were known as the English River band. They were included with the Fort Albany Band when Treaty 9 was signed in 1905. During the early twentieth century, they moved from the English River to Pagwa. Constance Lake First Nation is made up of former members of the English River, Fort Albany, Fort Hope, and Moose Factory Bands. They lived throughout the Kenogami River watershed (Constance Lake First Nation, n.d.; Long, 2010).

The ancestors of Constance Lake First Nation hunted, trapped, and fished along the Kenogami, Kabinakagami, Nagagami, Pagwachuan, Wakashi, Awagakama, Squirrel, Fox, Pitukupi, Little Ash, Big Ash, Little Current, Drowning, Ridge, Albany, and Shekak river systems and Pledger, Pitukupi, Constance, Trilsbeck, Serinack, Martison, Ridge, Melanson, Fushimi, Fox, Bannerman, and Luhta (Medicine Creek) lake systems (Constance Lake First Nation, n.d.).

1.2.2.4. Eabametoong (Fort Hope) First Nation

Eabametoong First Nation is an Anishinaabek community located on Eabamet Lake in the upper reaches of the Albany River, up-river from Marten Falls. The name Eabametoong means "at the reversing of the waterplace." The water flow from Eabamet Lake into the Albany River reverses each year, resulting from spring runoff water, such that water flows into Eabamet Lake from the Albany River for a short period of time (*Eabametoong First Nation*, 2022).

The community was made up of families of hunters and trappers that settled in close proximity to the H.B.C. post established in 1894. Fort Hope was an important post in the region attracting a large number of Anishinaabek hunters from both sides of the Albany and the upper Winisk Rivers. The earliest fur trade post in the area, Eabamet Lake House, was established by the Northwest Company in 1774.

Treaty 9 was signed at Fort Hope in 1905 and the Fort Hope band was established with Katchang the first elected ogimaa (leader/chief). The new community of Eabametoong was established in 1982 with the official name of Eabametoong First Nation being adopted in 1985.

1.2.2.5. Fort Albany First Nation

Fort Albany First Nation (Peetabeck) is an Inninuk community located along the west coast of James Bay. It was established in the vicinity of one of the earliest Hudson's Bay posts, built in the late seventeenth century. Fort Albany First Nation members signed Treaty 9 in 1905 (Long, 2010).

In 1957, the construction of a radar base divided and displaced the community. Catholic members of the community moved to Sinclair Island and the mainland opposite the south channel of the river where they became known as the Fort Albany First Nation. The Anglican members of the community settled on land set aside by Treaty 9 in 1905 and established the Kashechewan First Nation. Their traditional territory extends throughout the Albany River watershed (Long, 2010).

1.2.2.6. Ginoogaming First Nation

Ginoogaming First Nation was formerly known as the Long Lake Band and the Long Lake 77 First Nation. Ginoogaming First Nation is an Anishinaabek community located approximately 40 kilometres west of Geraldton on the north shore of Long Lake. Long Lake 77 reserve was established by Treaty 9 in 1906 (Long, 2010).

1.2.2.7. Kasabonika Lake First Nation

Kasabonika Lake First Nation is an Anishinini community located on Kasabonika Lake at the headwaters of the Winisk River approximately 100 kilometres northwest of Webequie. This community was originally included with the Big Trout Lake band (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug) at the time of the signing of the Treaty 9 Adhesion in 1929. Kasabonika Lake First Nation acquired band status in 1976 (Long, 2010). The community moved to its present location in 1964. Prior to the move it was situated five kilometres away on the Asheweig River (Sieciechowicz, 1986).

1.2.2.8. Kashechewan First Nation

Kashechewan First Nation was formerly part of the Fort Albany Inninuk community located on the west shore of James Bay. In 1957, Anglican members of the community left Fort Albany and established Kashechewan First Nation on reserve land set aside by Treaty 9. Ancestors of the Kashechewan First Nation were original signatories to Treaty 9 in 1905 (Long, 2010).

1.2.2.9. Kingfisher Lake First Nation

This Oji-Cree First Nation community is located approximately 350 kilometres northeast of Sioux Lookout on the south shore of Kingfisher Lake. In the early nineteenth century, the people who resided around Kingfisher Lake began trading at the nearby Big Beaver House outpost, run by the Hudson's Bay Company. Representatives of Kingfisher Lake First Nation participated in the signing of the Treaty 9 adhesion at Big Trout Lake in 1929-1930, and members were considered part of the larger Big Trout Lake band. The reserve lands were established in 1965 and Kingfisher Lake officially launched as its own band in 1975. Trapping, fishing and forestry are the key occupations/activities for band members (Chiefs of Ontario, 2005). Kingfisher Lake First Nation is a community within the Shibogama First Nations Council, a regional tribal council based in Sioux Lookout and which is itself a member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2024).

1.2.2.10. Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, formerly known as Big Trout Lake First Nation, is located on the north shore of Big Trout Lake. The community was established in the late eighteenth century in the area around the former Northwest Company outpost and a Hudson's Bay Company post was established in 1808. Big Trout Lake is situated at the headwaters of the Fawn River, a tributary of the Severn River. The Severn River and its tributaries comprise part of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation's traditional territory. Members of the community were signatories of the 1929 adhesion to Treaty 9 (Long, 2010).

1.2.2.11. Long Lake #58 First Nation

Long Lake #58 First Nation is situated on Highway 11 along the northeast shore of Long Lake and adjacent to the town of Longlac. Long Lake 58 First Nation's

traditional territory, on the northern shore of Long Lake, is within the James Bay drainage basin and is within the area of Treaty 9. However, the governments of Canada and Ontario hold that the band's aboriginal title was ceded to the Crown by the 1850 Robinson Superior Treaty, despite that treaty covering lands that drained into Lake Superior. The First Nation maintains that they never signed any treaty, and never ceded their aboriginal title to their traditional lands (Long Lake #58 First Nation, 2024).

1.2.2.12. Marten Falls First Nation

MFFN is an Anishinaabek community located at Ogoki Post at the confluence of the Ogoki and Albany Rivers, which is the first major rapids on the Albany travelling from James Bay. The original Anishinaabemowin name for the Albany River was the Cacheohawan River (Newton & Mountain, 1980, p. 57).

The first inland post of the H.B.C., Henley House was established about 80 kilometres down-river from Marten Falls in 1743. The post, re-named Gloucester House, was moved up-river to Washi Lake in 1774 until it was abandoned in 1814. In 1784, the H.B.C. established a major post at Marten Falls, which represented the centre of trade in the area until it was abandoned in 1923 when a new post was established at the mouth of the Ogoki River (Vyvyan, 1980). The Marten Falls post was also known as Ernest House (Newton & Mountain, 1980, p. 55).

While Anishinaabek hunters travelled 800 to 1,000 kilometres to trade at Gloucester House, travelling from the Lake Winnipeg, Rainy River, Lake Nipigon, and Lac Seul there was a group of hunters that lived in close proximity to the post. By 1817-18, there were 35 hunters and their families who hunted north of Washi Lake toward the Attawapiskat drainage system (Newton & Mountain, 1980, p. 58). When Treaty 9 was signed in 1905, there were approximately 125 community members present. William Whitehead was elected as Ogimaa (leader/chief) (Long, 2010). The signing took place at the former community location at Marten Falls. Although Anishinaabek families settled in close proximity to the H.B.C., some continue to live in the surrounding area. For example, the Baxter family has occupied a camp on Washi Lake for over 200 years (M. Cooper, personal communication, 2014).

1.2.2.13. Metis Nation of Ontario

The eighteenth century saw the ethnogenesis in Ontario of the Métis when Métis people began to identify as a separate group, rather than as extensions of their typically maternal First Nations and paternal European ancestry (MNC, n.d.). Living in both Euro-Canadian and Indigenous societies, the Métis acted as agents and subagents in the fur trade but also as surveyors and interpreters. Métis populations were predominantly located north and west of Lake Superior, however, communities were located throughout Ontario (MNC, n.d.; Stone & Chaput, 1978). These settlements were interconnected and defined by a highly mobile lifestyle, the fur trade network, seasonal rounds, kinship connections, and a shared collective history and identity (MNC, n.d.). Hunting, fishing, processing maple sugar and cultivating/harvesting crops were also important activities in Métis life (Lytwyn, 1998). These communities would continue to grow during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the establishment of the Northwest Company, XY Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, and significantly contributed to the economy and socio-political history of the Great Lakes region.

During the early nineteenth century, many Métis families moved towards locales around southern Lake Huron and Georgian Bay, including Kincardine, Owen Sound, Penetanguishene, and Parry Sound (MNC, n.d.). By the early 1900s, many people were disinclined to publicly self-identify as Métis in Ontario, due to backlash from a series of violent events involving Métis in Manitoba and Saskatchewan during the mid- to late-nineteenth century which culminated in the 1884-1885 uprising known as the North-West Rebellion (*Ibid*). By the mid-twentieth century, Indigenous communities, including the Métis, began to advance their rights within Ontario and across Canada, and in 1982, the Métis were recognized as one of the distinct Indigenous peoples in Canada. Recent decisions by the Supreme Court of Canada (*Daniels v. Canada (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)*, 2016; *R. v. Powley*, 2003) have reaffirmed that Métis people have full rights as one of the Indigenous people of Canada under subsection 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867.

1.2.2.14. Mishkeegogamang First Nation

Mishkeegogamang First Nation, formerly known as Osnaburgh prior to 1993, is an Ojibway community located at the intersection of Lake St. Joseph and the Albany River, approximately 315 kilometres north of Thunder Bay. Approximately 900 people reside on the two reserves that constitute this First Nation, with 500 more residing off the reserve (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2010). Historically, the people of Mishkeegogamang hunted, fished, trapped, and gathered available resources on a seasonal basis. In the late eighteenth century, Osnaburgh House was established by the Hudson's Bay Company at the northeast end of Lake St. Joseph. Mishkeegogamang First Nation signed the James Bay Treaty No. 9 in 1905. The main reserve community was established on Dog Hole Lake following the creation of Highway 599 in the 1950s (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2010).

1.2.2.15. Neskantaga First Nation

Neskantaga First Nation is an Anishininiimowin community situated on Attawapiskat Lake at the headwaters of the Attawapiskat River. The H.B.C. established Lake Attawapiskat post in 1814. In 1850, the post was renamed Lansdowne House, which was a northern outpost of the Fort Hope post on Eabamet Lake.

When Treaty 9 was signed in 1905, Neskantaga, like Webequie, was included with the Fort Hope band. At one time six or more settlements were occupied by families who traded and resided for part of the year at Neskantaga in close proximity to the H.B.C. post and the nearby Catholic church. These family-based settlements included Webequie, Nibinamik, Mameigwess, Kochichi, Birch Lake, and Otonabee (Taylor, 1971). Webequie and Nibinamik families chose to remain at their traditional settlements, while Mameigwess, Kochichi, Birch Lake, and Otonabee settled permanently at Neskantaga.

1.2.2.16. Nibinamik (Summer Beaver)

The Nibinamik First Nation is an Anishininiimowin community located in the headwaters of the Winisk River on Nibinamik Lake. According to Nibinamik Elder Tommy Yellowhead, the area was selected since it had been used for hunting and

trapping. Many of the Anishinaabek families came from Old Summer Beaver, which is located across the lake from the present community (Wabasse, 2019). The Old Summer Beaver settlement was occupied until 1969 when some community members moved to Webequie. The Nibinamik community was re-established in 1975 when Anglican community members left Neskantaga (Wabasse, 2019) due to religious differences with the Catholic majority.

1.2.2.17. North Caribou Lake First Nation

The North Caribou Lake First Nation, which is sometimes referred to as Weagamow First Nation and Round Lake First Nation, is an Oji-Cree community located approximately 320 kilometres north of Sioux Lookout. North Caribou Lake First Nation is a member of the Windigo First Nations Tribal Council and a member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (North Caribou Lake First Nation, 2015). The people in the North Caribou Lake area historically hunted, fished, trapped, and gathered on a seasonal basis, and a summer encampment attracted many people from neighbouring areas such as Weagamow Lake and Windigo Lake. When the Treaty 9 adhesion was signed in 1929, the people of these three communities united, and became known as the Caribou Lake band. The North West Company established a House at North Caribou Lake in 1809; a Hudson's Bay Company outpost was established at the same location in 1930, and a permanent H.B.C. store was erected at Weagamow Lake in 1949 (Gordon, 1983).

1.2.2.18. Wapekeka First Nation

Wapekeka First Nation, formerly called Angling Lake First Nation, is an Oji-Cree community located approximately 450 kilometres northeast of Sioux Lookout. This First Nation is a signatory to the Treaty 9 adhesion in 1929. While initially, band members were part of the Big Trout Lake Band, the community at Wapekeka separated and became its own band, with two reserves, in 1979 (Wapekeka First Nation, 2024). Wapekeka First Nation is a community within the Shibogama First Nations Council, a regional tribal council based in Sioux Lookout and which is itself a member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2024)

1.2.2.19. Wawakapewin First Nation

Wawakapewin First Nation is a small Oji-Cree community located approximately 350 kilometres northeast of Sioux Lookout. The community's location was strategically important for its abundant resources and its setting on Long Dog Lake along the Asheweig River system (Wawakapewin First Nation, 2024). Wawakapewin First Nation is a community within the Shibogama First Nations Council, a regional tribal council based in Sioux Lookout and which is itself a member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2024)

1.2.2.20. Webequie First Nation

WFN is an Anishinini (Oji-Cree) community located on the northern peninsula of Eastwood Island on Winisk Lake in the upper reaches of the Winisk River. The name for the community, "Webequie", comes from the Anishininiimowin word meaning "shaking head", which is a reference to the way mergansers shake their head. In 1916, the Geographic Names Board selected the name Winisk Lake over Wabikiwei (Webequie) or Duck Lake, indicating that the lake was also known by those two names. It is also referred to as Pepesquew Lake on the 1848 Arrowsmith Map (Pugh, 1971).

During the first half of the nineteenth century the H.B.C. established a post on Winisk Lake known as Fort Weenisk (Pugh, 1971). This post was still in operation in 1911 (Skinner, 1911). The H.B.C. also maintained a post, Fort Concord, in the 1830s further up in the headwaters of the Winisk River on Wapikopa Lake (Francis, 2018). In 1964, the H.B.C. re-established a store in the Webequie community.

The ancestors of the Webequie community have lived in this area for countless generations. In the 1970s, Webequie Elder Fred Jacobs reported that Waupus was the name of Anishinaabek families that lived between Fort Hope and Kasabonika, including the area of Webequie. These may have been the same Rabbit (Waupus) Anishinaabek hunters who were trading at Fort Albany in the 1720s (Greenberg & Morrison, 1982).

When Treaty 9 was signed in 1905, the Webequie community was included with the Fort Hope Band (Eabametoong) likely because Webequie families were trading furs and receiving supplies at the Hudson's Bay post at Lansdowne House, which was a northern outpost of the Fort Hope post on Eabamet Lake. In 1969, Winisk River Provincial Park was designated by the Ontario government as a Wild River Park, despite the fact that it encompassed the community. In 1985, Webequie finally acquired band status and in 2001 received full reserve status.

1.2.2.21. Weenusk First Nation

The Weenusk First Nation is a Mushkegowuk Cree community located near the mouth of the Winisk River. Since 1986, they have been situated at Peawanuk, which is approximately 40 kilometres upriver from the original settlement. The community relocated there due to severe spring flooding.

For hundreds of years, Weenusk families hunted, trapped, and fished throughout the Winisk River drainage, travelling on a seasonal basis to camps in the interior and on the Hudson's Bay coast. They travelled a considerable distance upriver, including to H.B.C. posts located at Fort Albany and Fort Severn to trade furs. In 1833, the H.B.C. built Fort Concord at the mouth of the Winisk River; however, it was short lived. In 1901, the H.B.C. established a second post, followed a few years later by their main competitors, the Réveillon Frères. Families continued to travel to their camps in the interior and on the coast, although more time was spent around the H.B.C. post, especially during the summer months. By the late nineteenth century, an Oblate mission and later a rectory was established near the post.

In 1930, the 26 families that traded at Winisk and comprised the Weenusk band signed the Adhesion to Treaty 9 and were assigned a reserve on the Ashweig River near its confluence with the Winisk River. Band members Xavier Patrick, John Bird, and David Sutherland were signatories to the treaty (Long, 2010).

1.2.2.22. Wunnumin First Nation

Wunnumin Lake First Nation is an Anishinini community located on Wunnumin Lake at the headwaters of the Pipestone River, which flows into the Attawapiskat River. Wunnumin Lake is called *Wanaman-zaaga'igan* in Anishinaabemowin and means Vermillion Lake, in reference to the vermillion-coloured clay about the lake (Wunnumin Lake First Nation, n.d.).

The former community was located approximately 20 kilometres away at Big Beaver House (Misamikwash Lake). This was the location of a Hudson's Bay post, which was established in 1808. During the first half of the twentieth century, a forest fire destroyed the Big Beaver House settlement and the community moved to its present location. In 1929-1930, the leaders of the Big Beaver House community participated in the signing of the Treaty 9 adhesion at Big Trout Lake (Wunnumin Lake First Nation, n.d.).

1.2.3 Other Land Uses

The following sub-sections discuss the various land uses found within or in close proximity to the study area as based on a review of secondary sources. Information on First Nation knowledge, traditional practices, and land use can be found in the various studies prepared by and/or for the individual First Nations as part of the Webequie Supply Road project. These studies are recent, community-led resources that articulate historical and contemporary uses of the study area and are the authoritative sources regarding the perspective of the individual First Nations of the landscape setting of the proposed undertaking.

1.2.3.1. Traditional Land Uses

As evidenced by the sections above, Indigenous people have been present in this area of northwestern Ontario for thousands of years. Information shared as part of Indigenous Knowledge and Community Land Use Plans include a variety of traditional land uses by First Nations living in the area. These include areas valued for traditional uses such as fishing, hunting, and gathering food and medicines; burial and/or ceremonial sites; and canoe and other travel routes and trails.

1.2.3.2. Fur Trade

In the Ontario context, the fur trade had begun along the shores of the St. Lawrence River in the late sixteenth century and the fur trade in northern Ontario came decades later. In 1670, the H.B.C. was established and its charter authorized it with ownership over all lands that drained into Hudson's Bay, including the study area. These territories, which was called Rupert's Land, were vast, equal to approximately one-third of the lands of Canada today (Conrad et al., 2014). As such, it was impossible for the English to control fully, and only a few outposts were established on Hudson's Bay. Meanwhile, in 1671, the French asserted their dominance over the vast swath of land to the north and west of the Great Lakes, and began their search for furs north of Lake Superior (Careless, 1993). The French only came to recognize H.B.C. authority in 1713, following decades of imperial warfare. Nevertheless, French traders remained engaged in the fur trade in northern Ontario, and by the 1740s, Indigenous peoples in the area either travelled to H.B.C. outposts to trade or engaged with French Canadian traders who were more open to direct contact, with many developing close kinship ties, and leading to the rise of the Métis population (Careless, 1993; Foster & Eccles, 2013).

Furs continued to be traded for almost two more centuries, all through the political strife between French and English colonial governments, and, after 1867, the Canadian government. In 1870, the newly-established federal government purchased Rupert's Land from the H.B.C. Thereafter, the federal government began to sign treaties with Indigenous peoples. The lands immediately south of the southern tip of the study area became part of Treaty No. 9 (James Bay Treaty) in 1905, and a 1929 expansion of Treaty No. 9 lands included the actual study area. The fur trade within what was eventually Treaty 9 territory is discussed in greater detail below.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, Anishinaabek families lived in small seasonally occupied settlements and camps throughout the upper reaches of the Albany, Winisk, and Attawapiskat River systems. During the fall, families would disperse to small hunting camps. In the spring they would travel to their fishing camps on the large lakes joining their extended family and other families where

they would remain until the fall. Some families would travel to trade their furs at the H.B.C. post situated at the mouth of the Albany River, while others would trade south of the height of land with the Northwest Company posts at Fort William and other interior locations.

After the mid-eighteenth century, the H.B.C. began to establish inland posts in competition with the rival Northwest Company. Anishinaabek hunters would no longer have to travel long distances to trade. Families began to live in close proximity to the posts, where they could obtain items from the H.B.C. store in exchange for furs. Anishinaabek also provided country food, game, and fish to the H.B.C. in exchange for cloth, flour, and sugar. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Catholic and Anglican churches were established in close proximity to the H.B.C. posts. By the end of the nineteenth century, more families settled in and around the posts for most of the year. In 1905, when the Treaty 9 Commission travelled to the region to enter into Treaty with the Anishinaabek, they planned visits to only Fort Hope and Marten Falls, both main posts of the H.B.C. The Anishinaabek assembled at these posts were given band status under the *Indian Act* and reserve land (Fort Hope and Marten Falls), while those from the surrounding territory did not receive band status or reserve land (Webequie, Nibinamik, Neskantaga, Attawapiskat, Kasabonika, and Weenusk). The H.B.C. made arrangements and paid for the Treaty Commissioners' visit, while the annuities and gratuities received by the Anishinaabek for entering into the treaty were spent at the H.B.C. stores (Long, 2010).The surrounding communities continued to travel to Fort Hope and Marten Falls to receive annuity payments on treaty day until 1930 when annuities were also paid at Lansdowne House and other Treaty 9 Adhesion bands listed in Section 1.2.2.

1.2.3.3. Overland Transportation

WFN is a remote community which is accessed by air or a seasonal winter road. The main winter route leads southwest to the Nibinamik First Nation winter road junction. A secondary, less travelled route, heads south directly to Neskantaga First Nation (Webequie First Nation and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2019, p. 38). Land travel east of Webequie is limited to a sparse, informal network of trails (Webequie First Nation, 2020, p. 100). The proposed

Webequie Supply Road starts at the Webequie Airport which is located south of the community. The proposed road then travels south, away from the community.

According to the Community Based Land Use Plan, WFN people intensively use the area within a 40 kilometre to 50 kilometre radius around the community for traditional and recreational activities and the Elders of Webequie talk of the area within one days walk radius from the community as being of particular importance. In addition to harvesting (e.g., hunting, fishing, trapping, trees, herbs and plants, etc.) for food, tools, clothing, and medicinal purposes and spiritual practices, WFN "actively use and maintain waterway and overland travel routes, trails, campsites, community use and trapping cabins, culturally significant and sensitive sites across the proposed planning area" of the Community Based Land Use Plan (Webequie First Nation and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2019, p. 34).

1.2.3.4. Commercial Land Use

WFN has been actively involved in resource based commercial activities for a number of generations, starting with the early fur trade as described in Section 1.2.3.2 above. Resource-based commercial activities include commercial fishing, commercial trapping, and commercial tourism, some of which continue today. Prior to the 1970s, the trapping industry and the fur trade was a primary source of income for Anishinaabek. Waterway travel routes located in the Winisk and adjacent watersheds provided access to H.B.C. trading post locations in the region. A number of traplines, trapper's cabins, and supporting bush infrastructure have been identified within the Webequie Supply Road study area. While commercial trapping is no longer a main source of income today, it is still valued economically, traditionally, and spiritually by WFN (Webequie First Nation and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2019, p. 34).

Beginning in the 1960s, WFN members held several commercial fishing licenses within the proposed Planning Area identified in the draft Community Based Land Use Plan, targeting whitefish, walleye, and sturgeon. While there are currently no active commercial fishing operations, Elders recall active commercial fishing operations during the 1960s and 1970s on Winisk, Chipai, Wapikopa, and

Kanachuan Lakes, as well as the Winisk River (Webequie First Nation and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2019, p. 34).

1.2.3.5. Tourism and Recreation

External tourism interests began to appear in the Winisk River area in the mid-1960s. In 1966, the provincial government set aside the "Winisk Wild River Indian Guide Territory" and established the Winisk River Provincial Park over Winisk Lake and Winisk River in 1968, encompassing the community within its boundary (Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, 2021). Outpost camps were located on the Winisk River and operated as hunting and fishing lodges catering to fly-in customers by Winisk River Camps, located in Webequie (Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, 2021). In July 1978, a schoolteacher in Webequie was funded by the Ministry of Natural Resources to canoe a portion of Winisk River Provincial Park to establish campsites and clear portages for park visitors (Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, 2021). In the 1980s, Webequie began a process to pursue reserve creation and change the boundary of the provincial park. As mentioned above, Webequie received official reserve status in 2001 (Webequie First Nation and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2019, pp. 17–18). Today, Winisk River Provincial Park sits north of the proposed corridor (a small section of the park falls within the R.S.A. and borders the approximate northern half of the WFN Reserve lands (Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, 2021). The park continues to provide opportunities for recreational use. Additionally, tourist lodges, fly-in hunting and fishing camps, and other tourist-related activities can be found in the vicinity.

1.2.3.6. Geological Survey of Canada and Mining

The Geological Survey of Canada (G.S.C.) was the first to explore the McFaulds Lake region in the James Bay Lowlands in 1886. That year, Robert Bell, an Officer of the G.S.C. and later its chief geologist and acting director, engaged in geological exploration and surveying in northern Ontario, including along parts of the Attawapiskat and Albany Rivers.

Mapping and exploration before 1959 were focused on petroleum potential. In the 1990s, an airborne magnetic survey was conducted throughout the northern part of the James Bay Lowlands focusing on diamond exploration (Noront Resources Ltd., 2021). The Victor Diamond Mine is located 150 kilometres east of the Project's east terminus near the proposed Noront Eagle's Nest Mine site. The Musselwhite gold mine is located approximately 210 kilometres to the west (Webequie First Nation, 2019, p. 19). In 2007, the region was given the name 'the Ring of Fire' due to the horseshoe shape of the mineral occurrences and deposits which were discovered by Noront. As of October 3, 2012, Noront was the largest exploration claim holder in the Ring of Fire, with 80,016 hectares of mineral claims.

A review of the Abandoned Mines Information System (AMIS), a database containing information on known abandoned mine sites and mine hazard features located on both Crown and privately held lands within Ontario, confirmed that there are no such sites within the Webequie Supply Road LSA.[1] According to the draft Webequie Supply Road Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference, there are 56 active, unpatented mining claims and one mining lease near, or overlapping with, the proposed Webequie Supply Road study area (Webequie First Nation, 2020).

1.2.4 Map Review

The study area is located in a remote section of the District of Kenora in northwestern Ontario. It is located within an area sometimes known as the Patricia Portion. The study area had been part of Rupert's Land, an enormous territory granted by the British Crown to the H.B.C. upon its incorporation in 1670. The Canadian government purchased Rupert's Land in 1868, and the study area became part of the Northwest Territories. In 1889, the Albany River became the northern boundary of Ontario. The part of the district north of the Albany River all the way to Hudson Bay was transferred from the Northwest Territories to Ontario in 1912 as part of the *Ontario Boundaries Extension Act*. This area was officially known as the Patricia District until 1937 when it was annexed to the

[1] Data available for review at https://www.hub.geologyontario.mines.gov.on.ca/

District of Kenora. Thereafter, it was commonly referred to as the Patricia Portion (Archives of Ontario, 2024a, 2024b).

No nineteenth-century maps were available at the time of report preparation that depict the area in sufficient detail for inclusion in this report. To complete the mapping review for the study area and the area in general, historical topographic mapping and geological survey mapping from the twentieth century were examined. This report presents maps from 1910, 1924, and 1978/1987 (Figure 2 through Figure 7).

The 1910 Geological Survey of Canada Map (Figure 2) depicts the study area in a remote and sparsely populated context in the west, however it does not illustrate the eastern half of the study area. Eastwood Island at the western terminus of the study area is not labelled but is depicted with a trail in the northern half of the island and an 'Indian House' on the north shore, both in the location of the WFN settlement area. 'Indian Graves' are depicted to the south of Eastwood Island on the shores of the lake. 'Weibikwei Lake', depicted in a similar location as in later mapping, is noted to have an average depth of 35 feet and contain sturgeon, whitefish, brook trout, doré (walleye), and pike. The map also depicts the geology of the area as Laurentian bedrock composed primarily of granitic gneisses and notes the surrounding woodlands as primary spruce with some tamarack, banksian pine, and cedar in the area.

The 1924 Rand McNally Map (Figure 3) depicts the study area vicinity in little detail, with Winisk Lake depicted in a globular shape that merely approximates its actual shape and small segments of associated watercourses including the Winisk River and Fishbasket River noted. The majority of the study area east of Winisk Lake does not contain any details in this map. Outside of the study area, the Attawapiskat River is noted to the east, Lansdowne Lake is depicted at the south, and Wapikopa Lake is depicted to the northwest.

The 1978/1987 topographic maps (Figure 4 through Figure 7) depict the study area in greater detail than earlier mapping, and also depicts the topography and elevations of waterbodies in the area. 'Webequie' is depicted as a small settlement on a peninsula at the northwest of Eastwood Island, with roads, structures, and a hospital noted. The remainder of Eastwood Island is wooded, as

is the remainder of the study area with the exception of waterbodies and marshland.

1.2.5 Aerial and Orthoimagery Review

A review of available Google satellite imagery from 1984 to 2022 shows that with the exception of the Eagle's Nest Mine in 2013, and the recently developed areas along the southern portion of Eastwood Island Road, no significant land alterations have been made during that time within the Study Area.

1.3 Archaeological Context

This section provides background research pertaining to previous archaeological fieldwork conducted within and in the vicinity of the Study Area, its environmental characteristics (including drainage, soils or surficial geology and topography, etc.), and current land use and field conditions. Three sources of information were consulted to provide information about previous archaeological research: the site record forms for registered sites available online from the MCM through "Ontario's Past Portal"; published and unpublished documentary sources; and the files of ASI.

1.3.1 Current Land Use and Field Conditions

The following information was provided in the Project *Webequie Supply Road Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference* report (dated August 2020) prepared by AtkinsRéalis Canada Inc., and from the Request for Proposal for WFN's Supply Road Project document (dated August 2018), produced by WFN.

Winisk River Provincial Park sits north of the proposed corridor and borders the approximate northern half of the WFN Reserve lands. The Victor Diamond Mine is located 150 kilometres east of the Project's east terminus, and east of the proposed Eagle's Nest Mine site. The Musselwhite gold mine is located approximately 210 kilometres to the west of the Project. Other land uses and water uses in the region include tourist lodges, fly-in hunting and fishing camps and other tourist-related activities, which are not located in close proximity to the WSR corridor.

There are also 56 active, unpatented mining claims and one mining lease near, or overlapping, the proposed WSR corridor.

WFN is located approximately 60 kilometres northwest of the Ring of Fire mine development area. WFN is a remote community, meaning it has no year-round access to the existing all-season road network. In September 2017, WFN initiated the WFN Supply Road Project, with the focus being on identifying a preferred corridor for connecting to the Ring of Fire mine development area. The Supply Road's preferred corridor analysis entailed community engagement with local trappers, land users, and traditional harvesters as well as the Webequie land use planning committee members identifying possible corridors from WFN's airport through the reserve and towards the mine development areas.

The project consists of an all season road with 35 metres right-of way in width and is approximately 107 kilometres in length, consisting of an approximate northwest-southeast segment running 51 kilometres from the WFN community to a 56 kilometres segment running east before terminating at the proposed Ring of Fire mining development. A total of 17 kilometres of the corridor sits within WFN reserve lands. The project will include both planning and construction of an all season road with bridge and culvert waterbody crossings and supportive temporary and permanent infrastructure such as, aggregate pits/quarries, construction camps, access roads and Maintenance and Storage Facility (refer to Figure X).

1.3.2 Geography

In addition to the known archaeological sites, the state of the natural environment is a helpful indicator of archaeological potential. Accordingly, a description of the physiography and soils are briefly discussed for the Study Area.

The S & G stipulates that primary water sources (lakes, rivers, streams, creeks, etc.), secondary water sources (intermittent streams and creeks, springs, marshes, swamps, etc.), ancient water sources (glacial lake shorelines indicated by the presence of raised sand or gravel beach ridges, relic river or stream channels indicated by clear dip or swale in the topography, shorelines of drained lakes or marshes, cobble beaches, etc.), as well as accessible or inaccessible

shorelines (high bluffs, swamp or marsh fields by the edge of a lake, sandbars stretching into marsh, etc.) are characteristics that indicate archaeological potential.

Water has been identified as a major concern during site selection and the presence of potable water is the single most important resource necessary for any extended human occupation or settlement. Since water sources have remained relatively stable in Ontario since 5,000 BP (Karrow & Warner, 1990, p. Figure 2.16), proximity to water can be regarded as a useful index for the evaluation of archaeological site potential. Indeed, distance from water has been one of the most commonly used variables for predictive modeling of site location.

Other geographic characteristics that can indicate archaeological potential include elevated topography (eskers, drumlins, large knolls, and plateaux), pockets of well-drained sandy soil, especially near areas of heavy soil or rocky ground, distinctive land formations that might have been special or spiritual places, such as waterfalls, rock outcrops, caverns, mounds, and promontories and their bases. There may be physical indicators of their use, such as burials, structures, offerings, rock paintings or carvings. Resource areas, including; food or medicinal plants (migratory routes, spawning areas) are also considered characteristics that indicate archaeological potential (S & G, Section 1.3.1).

The following description of the existing natural environment conditions comes from the preliminary 2017 baseline studies conducted for the Webequie Supply Road as reported in the *Baseline Environmental and Geotechnical Studies Report - Webequie Community Supply Road (TPA1B) and Nibinamik-Webequie Community Road (TPA1A)* (SNC-Lavalin, 2018).

1.3.2.1. Physiography

The western half of the Study Area is within the Severn Uplands division and Big Trout Lake ecoregion of the Canadian Shield physiographic region and the eastern half is within the James Bay Lowlands ecoregion of the Hudson Bay Lowland physiographic region. The area is known for the Precambrian bedrock, as well as many wetlands and large rivers and streams, which flow to Hudson Bay and James Bay.

The Study Area is situated within a band of sporadic permafrost that is part of the Discontinuous Permafrost Zone of Canada's permafrost (Webequie First Nation, 2020, p. 79). In the Discontinuous Zone, some areas beneath the land surface have permafrost and other areas are free of permafrost. In the sporadic permafrost band where the Project area is located, permafrost occurs in islands (10-50 % of the land area is underlain by permafrost), varies in thickness (estimated at a few metres in the Project area), the active layer (surface layer of soil or rock above the permafrost) may not extend down to the permafrost, and ground ice content in the upper 10-20 metres of the ground is categorized as Low (less than 10%). The thickness of the permafrost may be influenced by soil and rock type, snow cover and proximity to waterbodies.

Portions of the preferred route for the all-season road traverse intact boreal forest (including bogs and fens). The terrain is generally low gradient with large wetland areas, several lakes and ponds, and slow flowing, often meandering streams and rivers. Upland areas are common along riverbanks and associated with glacial till deposits. These areas, with contrasting vegetation due to much better drained soils, constitute a relatively low percentage of the landscape in the area. Poplar trees dominate upland glacial till deposits, while dense spruce trees typically dominate the stream and riverbanks.

The preliminary preferred route is also situated approximately 15 kilometres south of Winisk River Provincial Park, which is a natural heritage landscape feature of interest that contains physiographic landforms such as a large moraine and drumlin field. Geological features include the Sachigo Subprovince, Big Beaverhouse Moraine, Winisk Drumlin Field, and Cochrane Advance (Webequie First Nation, 2020, p. 76).

1.3.2.2. Surficial Geology

Surficial geology consists of exposed bedrock, as well as large moraines. Much of the surficial deposit is dominated by silt and silt clay deposits as a result of glaciolacustrine deposition from post-glacial Lake Agassiz. The landscape is weakly broken, with low lying ridges of clay and sand, and extensive peatlands in low lying areas (Webequie First Nation, 2020, p. 79). Terrain and topography are generally flat, with some localized relief. Large stretches of the preferred corridor

pass through water-logged areas/marshes exhibiting poor ground condition, with deeper peat and organics and poor drainage.

Figure 8 (with surficial geology data provided by AtkinsRéalis) illustrates that the westernmost part of the Study Area is primarily underlain by glacial deposits of undifferentiated till. Much of the Study Area is underlain by organic deposits associated with bogs and fens, such as peat, muck, and marl. These are permanently saturated poorly draining peatlands. There are some pockets of undifferentiated till scattered throughout the peatlands. A few areas are underlain by glaciofluvial ice-contact stratified deposits, including the location of the recommended aggregate source in the west and lands following the Muketei River in the east. That eastern area, in particular, has high archaeological potential.

1.3.2.3. Soils and Drainage

The project area is characterized by predominantly flat, poorly drained soils with slow rates of plant decay. As a result, the development of organic soils and peat is common throughout much of the area. The organic surface layer typically ranges from one to two metres in thickness. It is underlain by a clay/silt till layer up to two metres thick, and a Quaternary till layer up to five metres thick (Webequie First Nation, 2020, p. 79). Depth to bedrock ranges from five to 12 metres below the surface. Surficial material in the region consists of unstratified post-glacial till interspersed with bedrock outcrops and stratified till. The surficial material in the Project area is predominantly silty clay to silt matrix, commonly clast poor with high carbonate content.

Soil development in the region varies depending on drainage. Low lying areas consist of organic soils, and soils (regosolic) with limited development (i.e., less than five centimetres thick) due to erosion of the landscape or hillslopes with higher water runoff or wind exposure. Glaciofluvial esker deposits are common in the Project area. Eskers are ridges that typically consist of a core of stratified sands and gravels. In esker deposits, the soils are much better drained, there is little surface organic material, and the groundwater table is further below the surface. Eskers are of particular interest for the caribou habitat values analysis at the sub-range and range scales (AtkinsRéalis 2024b). Being a small proportion of

the landscape, eskers may have functions proportionally greater than their area alone might suggest.

1.3.2.4. Waterbodies and Watercourses

There are several larger rivers in the area, including the Winisk, Ekwan, Attawapiskat, Fishbasket and the Pineimuta Rivers. There are also some very large lakes, such as Winisk Lake in the northeast part of the Project area. There is also a vast network of smaller connected headwater streams, ponds and lakes. Many of these smaller streams are part of open fens. Streams in the region are low gradient and have low velocity flow throughout most of the year. The stream banks are typical of low gradient streams and are well defined by earth, boulders, bedrock outcrops and natural levees.

The project area is situated within the primary Southwestern Hudson Bay watershed (refer to Figure 6.2 information extracted from the 2017 All-Season Community Road Study). The area includes parts of the Winisk-Coast, Ekwan-Coast and Attawapiskat-Coast secondary watersheds, and falls within the following three tertiary watersheds:

- Attawapiskat – Pineimuta River, Muketei River, Attawapiskat River;
- Winisk – Fishbasket River, Wapitotem River; and
- Ekwan – Ekwan River.

The Attawapiskat River flows in an easterly direction to James Bay, and the Winisk and Ekwan River systems flow north to Hudson Bay.

1.3.3 Previously Registered Archaeological Sites

In Ontario, information concerning archaeological sites is stored in the Ontario Archaeological Sites Database (OASD) maintained by the MCM. This database contains archaeological sites registered within the Borden system. Under the Borden system, Canada has been divided into grid blocks based on latitude and longitude. A Borden block is approximately 13 kilometres east to west, and approximately 18.5 kilometres north to south. Each Borden block is referenced by a four-letter designator, and sites within a block are numbered sequentially as

they are found. The Study Area under review is located in Borden blocks *FeIn, FeIo, FeIp, FeIq, FeIr, FeIs, FeIt, FfIq, FfIs, FfIt, FfIu, FgIt,* and *FgIu*. Only the RSA is located within Borden blocks *FfIq, FgIt,* and *FgIu*.

According to the OASD, five previously registered archaeological sites are located within approximately one kilometre of the Study Area (MCM 2024). A summary of the sites is provided in Table 1 below. FeIn-1 is the only site located within the RSA near the Muketei River, indicated in bold text (see also this report's *Supplementary Documentation* for site location mapping).

Table 1: Registered Sites within One Kilometre of the Study Area

Borden number	Site Name	Temporal/ Cultural Affiliation	Site type	Researcher
FgIu-1	Balancing Rock	Unknown	Unknown	Riddell 1981
FgIu-2	Rusty Tins	Unknown	Unknown	Riddell 1981
FgIu-3	Sister's Birthday	Unknown	Unknown	Riddell 1981
FgIu-4	None	Unknown	Unknown	Riddell 1981
FeIn-1	**None**	**Pre-Contact Indigenous**	**Butchering**	**Woodland Heritage 2012**

The sites registered under FgIu constitute the only sites in that Borden block and are greater than 50 metres from the Study Area. FeIn-1 is the only site registered in the FeIn Borden block. No sites are registered in any of the remaining Borden blocks that overlap the Study Area.

1.3.4 Previous Archaeological Assessments

According to the background research, two previous report details previous archaeological assessments within 50 metres of the Study Area:

1.3.4.1. Woodland Heritage (2011) *Stage 1 Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment of a Proposed All-Season Road from Former Highway 808, Northeast of Pickle Lake, to Webequie Junction, and a Winter Road Access Corridor/Transmission Line/Slurry Pipeline from Webequie Junction to the Eagle's Nest Project in BMA 526 862 (Geographic Area), Kenora District, Ontario* [P016-281-2010]

The assessment was undertaken for a proposed all-season road and winter road access corridor, including the transmission line and slurry pipeline corridor, from the former Highway 808 area north of Pickle Lake area northwest to Webequie Junction in the Noront Eagle's Nest project area. No property inspection was conducted due to the remoteness of the area. Stage 2 archaeological assessment was recommended for areas of high archaeological potential associated with the new winter access road alignment where they intersect the shorelines of lakes or banks of navigable (by canoe) rivers. It is expected that due to the abundance of muskeg and permanently saturated soils that not all of the areas will require testing but will be determined and documented through the Stage 2 field assessment work.

1.3.4.2. Woodland Heritage (2013) *Stage 1 Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment of the Proposed Noront Eagle's Nest Mine Site, in BMA 527 862 and BMA 526 862 (Unsurveyed), Kenora District, Ontario* [P208-040-2012]

The assessment was undertaken ahead of proposed development associated with the Eagle's Nest project, including roads and access corridors, a plant site, camp, and mineral extraction areas. A helicopter was used to assess the archaeological potential of the Muketei River. The property inspection focussed on areas of proposed infrastructural development as well as confirming areas of archaeological potential along the Muketei River and the esker area to the north.

Most of the lands were permanently saturated muskeg or peatlands. Some areas, mostly those associated with modern navigable water, had drier soils along their banks. No areas of archaeological potential were located in either the plant or mine site area. Several areas of high archaeological potential were identified in the area of the proposed airstrip and the banks of the northern portion of the Muketei River.

The visual assessment identified the surface findspot FeIn-1 consisting of a chert knife, located on a trail that led to the Muketei River – this confirmed the high archaeological potential of the esker (see Figure 14 of the current report). It was recommended that a Stage 2 archaeological assessment be carried out in advance of the development of the airstrip area and any impacts along the Muketei River.

1.4 Indigenous Knowledge

Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is considered to be a holistic body of knowledge containing information and records collected by Indigenous Communities that is considered to be of cultural, spiritual, historical, and community significance to its members. Much of this knowledge may have been passed on from generation to generation. Each community will have its own approach to collecting, recording, sharing and using this knowledge (Webequie First Nation, 2019, pp. 60–61).

Land Use Plans and IK studies were completed as part of the Project and provide information on the individual First Nations' knowledge, traditional practices, and land use. These studies are recent, community-led resources that articulate historical and contemporary uses of the study area and are the authoritative sources regarding the perspective of the individual First Nations of the landscape setting of the proposed undertaking. Mapping of IK features created as part of the studies by WFN and MFFN is provided in the *Supplementary Documentation* associated with the Stage 1 Report.

1.4.1 Webequie First Nation:

The following sources of data from were reviewed for the Stage 1 report:

- Shapefiles identifying the location of sites and features, provided in February 2021;
- *Webequie First Nation On-Reserve Land Use Plan* (May 31, 2019);
- *Draft Webequie First Nation Community Based Land Use Plan* (v. 4.2, March 2019); and
- *Webequie First Nation Indigenous Knowledge Study for the Webequie Supply Road. Interim Report.* (Stantec Consulting Ltd., 2024), and associated shapefiles

The *Webequie First Nation On-Reserve Land Use Plan* (May 31, 2019) provides information and guidance for community land use and development projects. Section 4.2 of the Land Use Plan identifies a number of "Known Culturally Sensitive Areas" within the boundary of the WFN reserve, and identifies important cultural areas as:

  - Sites identified as important traditional use, historic, or cultural significant areas through pre-planning input from members, families, and elders;
  - Registered and/or known archaeological sites;
  - Sites identified during pre-development site investigations;
  - Sites discovered during site construction.

A map of Known Culturally Sensitive Areas is presented on page 52 of the report. Known Culturally Sensitive Areas that are located within or intersect with the LSA were identified for the purposes of this Stage 1 Report as areas of archaeological potential, and their approximate location has been mapped on Figure 11 through Figure 14. In some cases, the approximate location of these sites overlaps with more specifically mapped areas provided in the Project-related shapefiles shared in 2021 and 2024. In instances of overlap, the shapefile information was used to map areas of archaeological potential.

The *Webequie First Nation Indigenous Knowledge Study for the Webequie Supply Road* "is composed of traditional land and resource use (TLRU), traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), and socio-economic information (see Section 4.1), shared by Webequie First Nation, as well as any cumulative changes, concerns, and recommended enhancement or accommodation measures identified by Webequie First Nation study participants. This report also integrates spatial information shared by Webequie First Nation Knowledge Holders during previous studies to assist the Webequie First Nation with demonstrating historical and current knowledge and use of the lands, waters, and resources in the vicinity of the Project. This information conveys cumulative changes experienced by Webequie First Nation members over time." (Stantec Consulting Ltd., 2024). Information provided by Stantec by WFN included recorded interviews and mapping sessions with Elders and Knowledge Holders conducted by WFN on the reserve and in Thunder Bay between September 2023 and September 2024. Spatial information and relevant land use reports were also reviewed to contribute to the IK study. This spatial information was also shared with ASI in the form of shapefiles. ASI participated in Indigenous knowledge validation interviews with knowledge holders in WFN on August 21-22, 2024.

In total, ASI has identified 38 features of cultural significance from these studies which indicate archaeological potential within the LSA. Table 2 lists these features with a brief description, based on available information, and comments about their potential cultural heritage value or interest (CHVI). Mapping of the specific points is included in the Supplementary Documentation to this report. It is also important to note that no identified burial sites are located within the LSA.

Preliminary IK information gathered during these interviews has provided more specific data regarding spiritually and culturally significant sites including their nature and specific location. These data indicate that the general area of cultural significance in the eastern end of the RSA, exhibited by a spatially broad polygon in the earlier studies is based on a number of specific spiritually significant locations north of the RSA.

Any future updates to the IK information gathered as part of the project must be considered during any future archaeological assessments.

Table 2: Inventory of cultural features identified by Webequie First Nation

Type of Feature	Location	Description
Culturally Sensitive Area and Language Point	WFN	Language point: *Kah-pih-kah-koo-tah-oo-tayk* Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area	WFN	Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area	WFN	Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Language Point	WFN	Language point: *A-kwo-ka-miing* Located on Winisk Lake Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area	WFN	Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Language Point	WFN	Language point: *Ney-shoosh-kwaa-pii-kang* Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Language Point	WFN	Language point: *Kah-bii-kwako-tah-O-teg* Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Language Point	WFN	Language point: *Oo-buhsh-kwang* Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Harvesting Site	WFN	Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area	WFN	Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Harvesting Site	WFN and Provincial Crown Land	Winisk Lake was identified as a Ceremonial Area (Cultural and Sacred Sites). Discrete areas of Winisk Lake were also identified as seasonal net and ice fishing areas, and culturally sensitive areas. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Language Point	WFN	Language point: *Ah-sah-mah-ah-noo-kaw-sh-kway-pih-nah-ning* Located on Winisk Lake Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Travel Routes	WFN and Provincial Crown Land	Network of travel routes identified by WFN. Various segments have been identified as trails, historical travel routes, trapping routes, multi-purpose routes, and portages. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI

Type of Feature	Location	Description
Culturally Sensitive Area	WFN	Bender Lake as a whole was identified in the 2024 Study. Four smaller culturally sensitive areas along the shoreline were identified in the 2019 Plan. Travel routes that intersect the Lake have been identified separately. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area	Provincial Crown Land	Lake identified in the 2024 Study. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area	Provincial Crown Land	Lake identified in the 2024 Study. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area	WFN and Provincial Crown Land	Odobas Lake identified in the 2024 Study. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Harvesting Site	WFN and Provincial Crown Land	Gooseberries Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Harvesting Site	WFN and Provincial Crown Land	Lake identified in the 2024 Study. Two smaller Fishing Areas on the lake were identified in the 2021 shapefiles. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Resource Location	Provincial Crown Land	Gravel Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Language Point	Provincial Crown Land	Language point: *Puh-kay-kuh-mang* Located on part of a Lake. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Harvesting Site	Provincial Crown Land	Gooseberries Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area, Language Point and Harvesting Site	WFN	Area includes a Spring Water location as well as a Language Point: *Oon-tah-ay-nih-kah-ming.* Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Harvesting Site	WFN	Juniper and Spring Water site. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Harvesting Site	WFN	Fish spawning area. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area	Provincial Crown Land	Part of a River. Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI

Type of Feature	Location	Description
Harvesting Site	Provincial Crown Land	Trapping – Martens and Beavers Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI
Culturally Sensitive Area and Harvesting Site	Provincial Crown Land	Moose Habitat and Moose Hunting Further consultation with WFN may provide more information on the area and its potential CHVI

1.4.2 Marten Falls First Nation

The *Marten Falls First Nation Indigenous Knowledge, Land Use and Occupancy Study for the Northern Access Roads – Proposed Webequie Supply Road Project* (Marten Falls First Nation, 2024) was reviewed for the Stage 1 report.

The MFFN's asserted traditional territory extends into the eastern portion of the proposed Webequie Supply Road LSA. A number of valued components were considered as part of the data collection for the MFFN study, four of which were identified and mapped within a 50 kilometre-buffer zone of the proposed WSR route.

One cultural significance from these studies indicates archaeological potential within the LSA. The feature is a historical trail located at the eastern-most end of the study area and extends towards the northeast. The approximate location of the historical trail has been mapped. (Figure 14). The historical trail has been used by the people of MFFN for hundreds of years and "the participant who mapped this trail explained that they have used it to visit their grandmother in Attawapiskat" (Marten Falls First Nation, 2024, p. 39).

1.4.3 Weenusk First Nation

The *Draft Weenusk First Nation Existing Conditions Report: Webequie Supply Road Project* (MNP LLP, n.d.) was reviewed. See Section 3.3.21 for more information on Weenusk First Nation.

The Existing Conditions Report mapping identifies that Weenusk First Nation caribou hunting and pickerel and walleye fishing areas extend south into Winisk River Provincial Park and part of the WFN reserve, including a section of the Webequie Supply Road LSA. Transportation uses also extend south in a similar manner. Other harvesting areas, such as trapping, berries and plants, are located north of the Webequie Supply Road study area. Traditional Ecological Knowledge from Weenusk First Nation indicates that the Webequie Supply Road project is located within caribou and moose migration routes. Other sites of significance, such as medicine gathering sites, important sites, burial sites, and family territory

are located north of the Webequie Supply Road LSA and RSA outside of the Stage 1 Study Area.

2.0 Analysis and Conclusions

The S & G, Section 1.3.1, lists criteria that are indicative of archaeological potential. The Study Area meets the following criteria indicative of archaeological potential:

- Previously identified archaeological sites (FeIn-1);
- Water sources: primary, secondary, or past water source;
- Resource areas (as identified by WFN);
- Early historical transportation routes (as identified by WFN);
- Proximity to early settlements (Webequie First Nation);
- Elevated topography (eskers, drumlins, large knolls, plateaux?); and,
- Well-drained soils

Part of the Study Area includes lands within the high water mark of various significant watercourses and waterbodies. Archaeological potential must be evaluated following the MCM's *Criteria for Evaluating Marine Archaeological Potential* checklist if impacts to any lakebed/riverbed are proposed.

Portions of the LSA contain vast wetlands and poorly drained permanently saturated soils, as determined through a review of provincial wetland and surficial geology data. According to the S & G Section 2.1 these areas are considered to display permanently low and wet conditions with low or no archaeological potential (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas hatched in blue). However, these areas retain archaeological potential until a property inspection is carried out to confirm the extent of the swamps and to locate the shorelines.

In accordance with the S & G Section 1.3.2, any area which is documented to have been subject to deep and extensive land alterations can be determined to not retain archaeological potential. Available project mapping and background research for the LSA indicates three areas of significant disturbances, including the existing Webequie Road/Eastwood Island Road/Road M right-of-way, the visible footprint of the Webequie Airport, and the Eagle's Nest Mine area

(Figure 9 and Figure 14: areas highlighted in yellow). However, these areas retain archaeological potential until a property inspection is carried out to confirm the extent of disturbance.

2.1 Alternatives for Potential Evaluation in Special Conditions: Remote Areas

S & G Section 1.3.4 *Alternatives for potential evaluation in special conditions: Remote areas* states that a reduction of areas recommended for Stage 2 may be made for areas that are remote and difficult to access. The degree of remoteness must be documented to demonstrate there are practical obstacles in achieving access based on a matter of distance and lack of available transportation infrastructure and factors of visibility. The S & G does not specify the distance considered too remote to access from any transportation infrastructure.

The Study Area is within densely forested lands, and largely has no existing transportation infrastructure. Much of the Study Area consists of vast peatlands, organic deposits of peat, muck, and marl, which have permanently saturated soil conditions and therefore low archaeological potential. According to S & G Section 1.3.4 , Stage 2 survey may be reduced in these areas due to the logistics of accessing these remote locations, and their inherent low potential for archaeological materials (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas highlighted in grey). Lands within 50 metres of water or 150 metres of features of archaeological potential must still require Stage 2 survey, as described below.

2.2 Alternative Strategies for Potential Evaluation in Special Conditions: Canadian Shield

In accordance with the S & G Section *1.3.3 Alternative Strategies for Potential Evaluation in Special Conditions: Canadian Shield*, Standard 2, areas demonstrated to have higher archaeological potential and differing characteristics from most of the surrounding area within the Canadian Shield should be subject to complete assessment and systematic survey. Within the LSA this includes pockets of well-drained deposits, as determined through a review of provincial wetland and surficial geology data (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas highlighted in green).

These areas require Stage 2 test pit survey, prior to any proposed construction impacts.

2.3 Alternative Strategies for Special Survey Conditions: Test Pit Survey in Northern Ontario and on Canadian Shield Terrain

Modelling archaeological potential involves reconstructing natural and social environments of the past, reconstructing the life ways of various cultural groups that occupied these past environments, then examining relationships between the life ways and the environment in order to predict the locations that may have been the focus of past human activity. By identifying the relationship between known sites and past environments, it is possible to select the factors that influenced site selection. However, while site selection may have been influenced by a few important variables, it was a complete decision-making process. Furthermore, given the lack of detailed archaeological research in the vicinity of the Study Area, modelling site potential for the Study Area can only be accomplished at a general, deductive level through reference to land-use patterns documented elsewhere in the boreal forest.

In the Canadian Shield and northern Ontario in general there is an over-abundance of water, therefore, distance from water alone is not a useful predictive index. One must consider other environmental features in addition to potable water to predict the location of sites. In order to develop a model that is relevant to the boreal nature of the Canadian Shield in which the Study Area is located, it is necessary to examine the existing Indigenous site database, as well as ethnographic or historic descriptions of Indigenous land use.

Lakes and large rivers are probably the most important foci of Indigenous settlement. Generally, lakes over 25 hectares are likely to be suitable for extended occupation, as the presence of a reliable fishery is a necessary prerequisite to settlement. While the general shoreline of a lake has potential for sites, certain shoreline features serve to enhance that potential: These include points of land, islands, river mouths and narrows, as well as secondary features

such as rapids, falls, portages, and river mouths or confluences along rivers that drain to or from lakes greater than 25 hectares (ASI 2002).

Wetland areas within reasonable proximity to the primary features noted above may have the potential for sites related to hunting and plant collecting. Camps associated with wetlands would be located on well drained locations adjacent to the wetland or on ridges that extend into wetland areas. Throughout the region, extensive areas of low-lying meadows and increasingly wetter, muck soils are present. Vegetation associated with low-lying wet areas, such as reed canary grass, cattails, and sedges are also present (Kaiser, 1988).

Other geographic characteristics that can indicate precontact archaeological potential include elevated topography (eskers, drumlins, large knolls, plateaux), pockets of well-drained sandy soil, especially near areas of heavy soil or rocky ground, and distinctive land formations that might have been special or spiritual places, for Indigenous populations such as waterfalls, rock outcrops, caverns, mounds, and promontories and their bases. There may be physical indicators of their use by Indigenous peoples, such as burials, Structures, offerings, rock paintings or carvings. Resource areas, including food or medicinal plants (migratory routes, spawning areas, prairie), and scarce raw materials (quartz, copper, ochre, or outcrops of chert) are also considered characteristics that indicate precontact archaeological potential (MTC 2011b:18).

In accordance with S & G Section 2.1.5 *Alternative Strategies for Special Survey Conditions: Test Pit Survey in Northern Ontario and on Canadian Shield Terrain,* during the Stage 2, areas of test pit survey may be reduced (MTC 2011b, p. 35):

> Standard 1: Where the identified feature of archaeological potential is a modern water source, test pitting is required between zero and 50 metres from the feature. Space test pits at maximum intervals of five metres. Survey is not required beyond 50 metres.
>
> Standard 2: For features of archaeological potential other than modern water sources (eg., historic water sources such as glacial shorelines) test pitting is required as follows:

a. Space test pits at maximum intervals of five metres between zero and 50 metres from the feature of archaeological potential

b. Space test pits at maximum intervals of 10 metres between 50 and 150 metres from the feature of archaeological potential

c. Survey is not required beyond 150 metres.

Standard 3: While maintaining standard survey grids as closely as possible, the consultant archaeologist may vary from standard survey grids as necessary, based on professional judgment. Document and explain the rationale for all variations in the Stage 2 report.

A buffer of 50 metres extending inland from known modern watercourses, waterbodies, and wetland areas demonstrates there are areas of high archaeological potential with the Study Area (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas highlighted in orange). These areas require Stage 2 test pit survey, prior to any proposed construction impacts.

A buffer of 150 metres extending from features of archaeological potential as determined by the WFN and MFFN Indigenous Knowledge studies, including Culturally and Sacred Sites, and Travel Routes. These areas require Stage 2 test pit survey, prior to any proposed construction impacts studies (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas highlighted in pink).

2.4 Conclusions

The Stage 1 Background Research report found that only one previously registered archaeological site (FeIn-1) is located within the RSA near the Muketei River. A review of the Land Use Plans and Indigenous Knowledge studies from WFN, MFFN, and Weenusk First Nation indicated that there are 39 features of cultural significance from these studies which indicate archaeological potential within the LSA. In accordance with S & G Section 2.1.5 *Alternative Strategies for Special Survey Conditions: Test Pit Survey in Northern Ontario and on Canadian Shield Terrain* parts of the LSA require Stage 2 survey.

The remainder of the LSA has been identified as exhibiting low archaeological potential on account of presumed disturbed or being located within vast wetlands and poorly drained permanently saturated soils. However, these areas retain archaeological potential until a property inspection is carried out to confirm the extent of disturbance.

3.0 Recommendations

In light of these results, the following recommendations are made:

1) Part of the LSA exhibits high archaeological potential within 50 metres of modern water sources (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas highlighted in orange). These areas require Stage 2 test pit survey at five metre intervals, prior to any proposed construction impacts, in accordance with S&Gs Section 2.1.5 Standard 1;

2) Part of the LSA exhibits high archaeological potential within 150 metres of features of archaeological potential as identified in the Indigenous Knowledge studies (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas highlighted in pink). These areas require Stage 2 test pit survey, prior to any proposed construction impacts, in accordance with S&Gs Section 2.1.5 Standard 2;

3) Parts of the LSA are within pockets of well-draining soil surrounded by rockland and exhibit archaeological potential (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas highlighted in green). These areas require Stage 2 test pit survey, prior to any proposed construction impacts, in accordance with S&Gs Section 1.3.3 Standard 2;

4) Part of the LSA does not retain archaeological potential on account of disturbance from the construction of the existing roadways, airport, and Eagle's Nest Mine area (Figure 9 and Figure 14: areas highlighted in yellow). However, these areas retain archaeological potential until a property inspection is carried out to confirm the extent of disturbance.

5) The remainder of the LSA is located in presumed permanently saturated soils of swampy wetlands and exhibit low archaeological potential (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas hatched in blue). These areas retain archaeological potential until a property inspection is carried out to confirm the extent of the swamps and to locate the shorelines;

    a) Parts of these permanently saturated areas of low archaeological potential are also considered remote and inaccessible and Stage 2 survey is not required for these areas under the S & G Section 1.3.4 (Figure 11 through Figure 14 areas highlighted in grey);

6) If impacts to lakebeds or riverbeds are proposed, archaeological potential must be evaluated following the MCM's *Criteria for Evaluating Marine Archaeological Potential* checklist;

7) Should the proposed work extend beyond the current Study Area, further Stage 1 archaeological assessment should be conducted to determine the archaeological potential of the surrounding lands.

NOTWITHSTANDING the results and recommendations presented in this study, ASI notes that no archaeological assessment, no matter how thorough or carefully completed, can necessarily predict, account for, or identify every form of isolated or deeply buried archaeological deposit. In the event that archaeological remains are found during subsequent construction activities, the consultant archaeologist, approval authority, and the Cultural Programs Unit of the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism should be immediately notified.

The above recommendations are subject to Ministry approval, and it is an offence to alter any archaeological site without MCM concurrence. No grading or other activities that may result in the destruction or disturbance of any archaeological sites are permitted until notice of MCM approval has been received.

4.0 Legislation Compliance Advice

ASI advises compliance with the following legislation:

- This report is submitted to the MCM as a condition of licensing in accordance with Part VI of the Ontario Heritage Act, RSO 2005, c 0.18. The report is reviewed to ensure that it complies with the standards and guidelines that are issued by the Minister, and that the archaeological field work and report recommendations ensure the conservation, preservation, and protection of the cultural heritage of Ontario. When all matters relating to archaeological sites within the Project area of a development proposal have been addressed to the satisfaction of the MCM, a letter will be issued by the Ministry stating that there are no further concerns with regards to alterations to archaeological sites by the proposed development.

- It is an offence under Sections 48 and 69 of the Ontario Heritage Act for any party other than a licensed archaeologist to make any alteration to a known archaeological site or to remove any artifact or other physical evidence of past human use or activity from the site, until such time as a licensed archaeologist has completed archaeological field work on the site, submitted a report to the Minister stating that the site has no further cultural heritage value or interest, and the report has been filed in the Ontario Public Register of Archaeology Reports referred to in Section 65.1 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

- Should previously undocumented archaeological resources be discovered, they may be a new archaeological site and therefore subject to Section 48 (1) of the Ontario Heritage Act. The proponent or person discovering the archaeological resources must cease alteration of the site immediately and engage a licensed consultant archaeologist to carry out archaeological fieldwork, in compliance with sec. 48 (1) of the Ontario Heritage Act.

- The Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002, S.O. 2002, c.33, requires that any person discovering or having knowledge of a burial site shall immediately notify the police or coroner. It is recommended that the Registrar of Cemeteries at the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery is also immediately notified.

- Archaeological sites recommended for further archaeological field work or protection remain subject to Section 48(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act and may not be altered, nor may artifacts be removed from them, except by a person holding an archaeological license.

5.0 Bibliography and Sources

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6.0 Maps

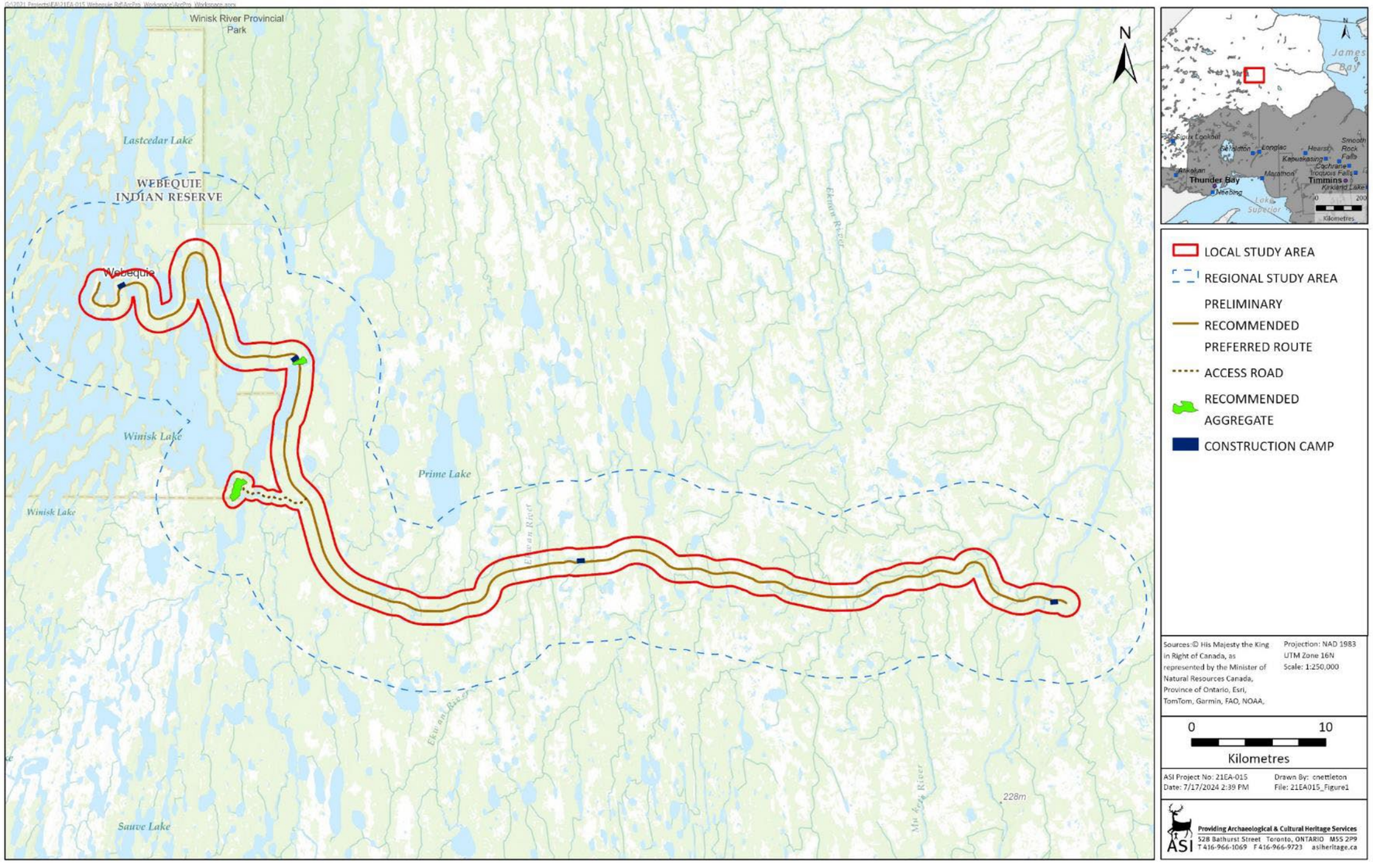


Figure 1: Webequie Supply Road Project Study Area

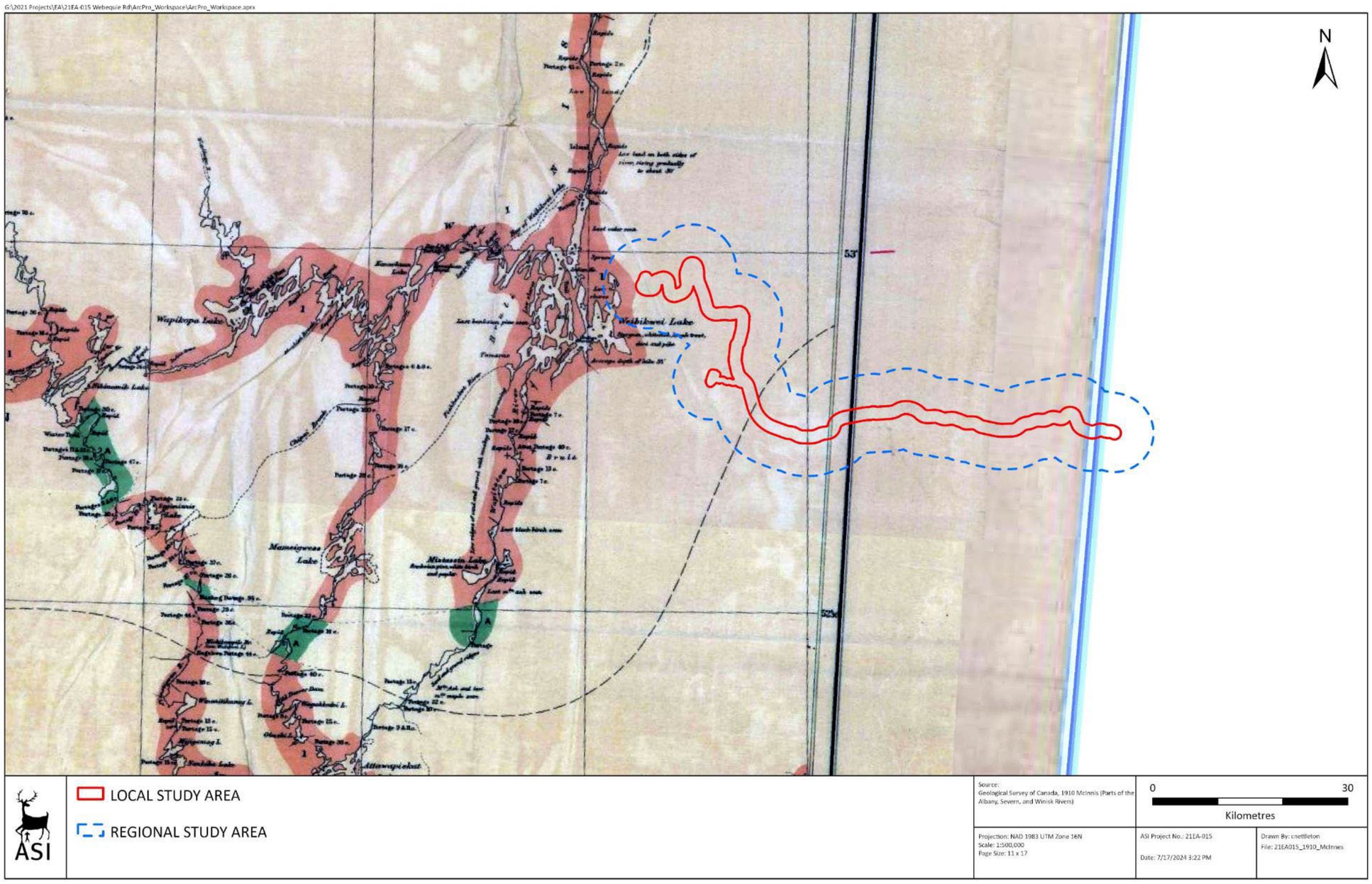


Figure 2: Study Area (Approximate Location) Overlaid on the 1910 McInnes Map

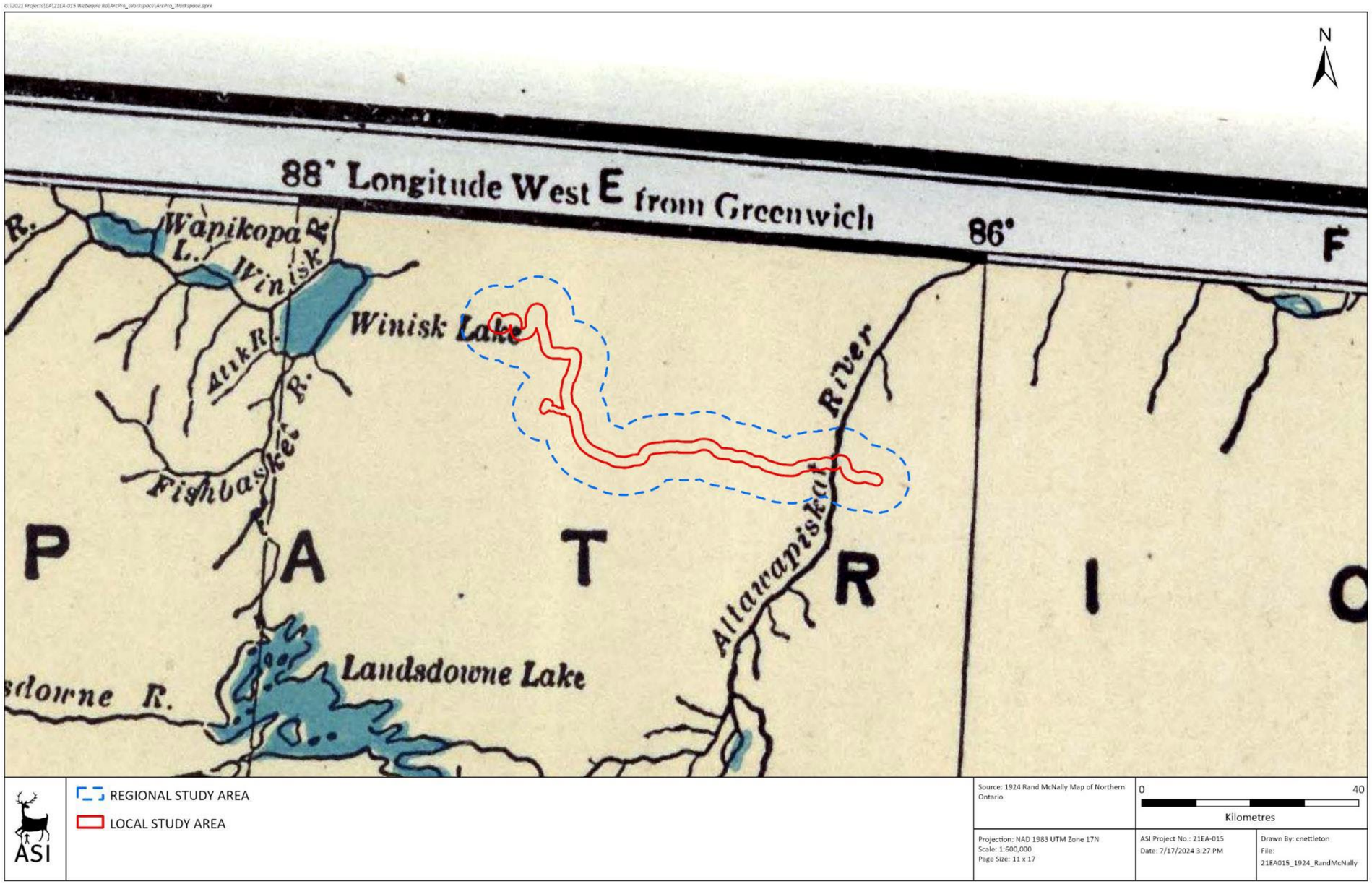


Figure 3: Study Area (Approximate Location) Overlaid on the 1924 Northern Ontario Rand McNally Map

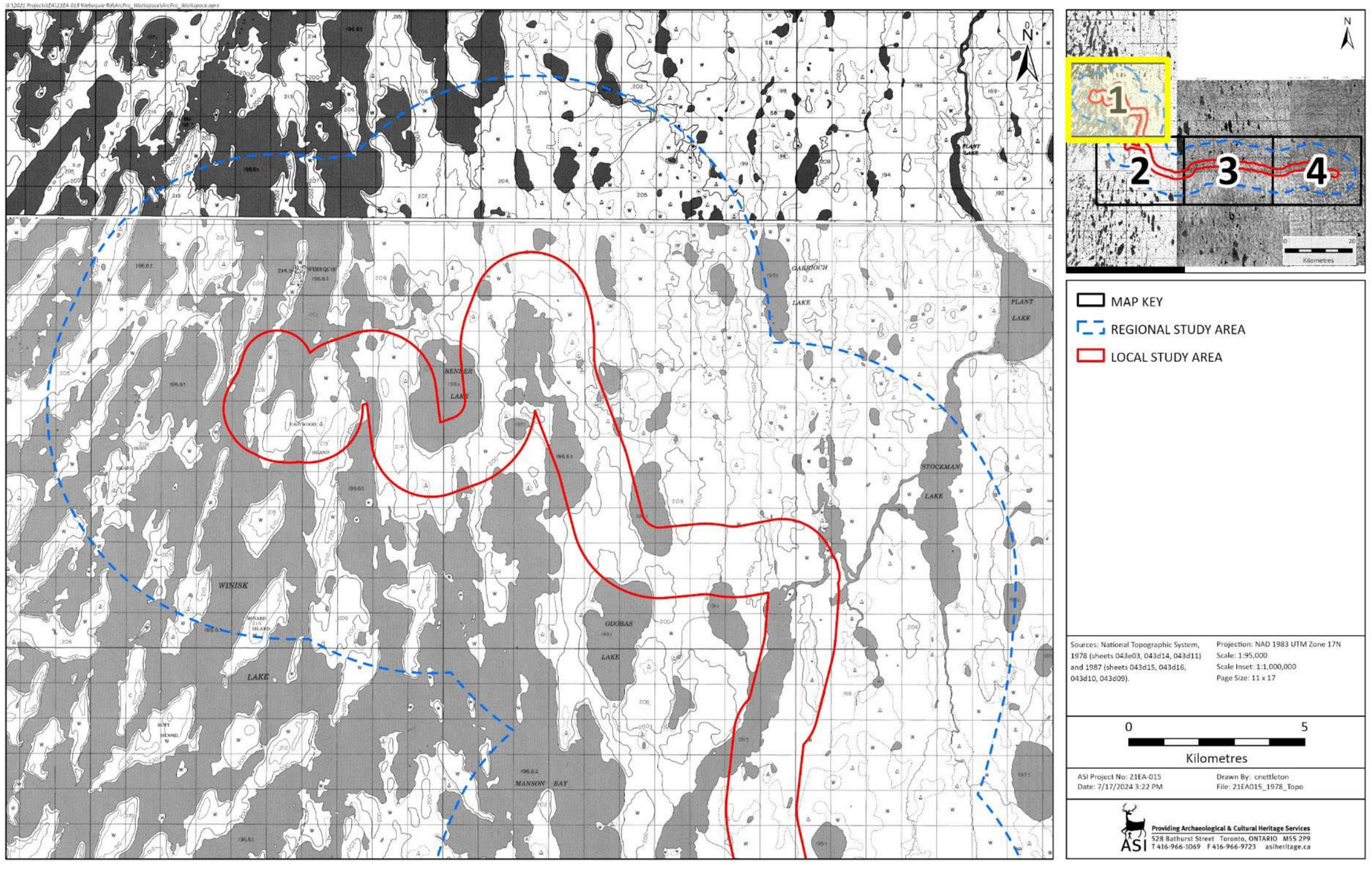
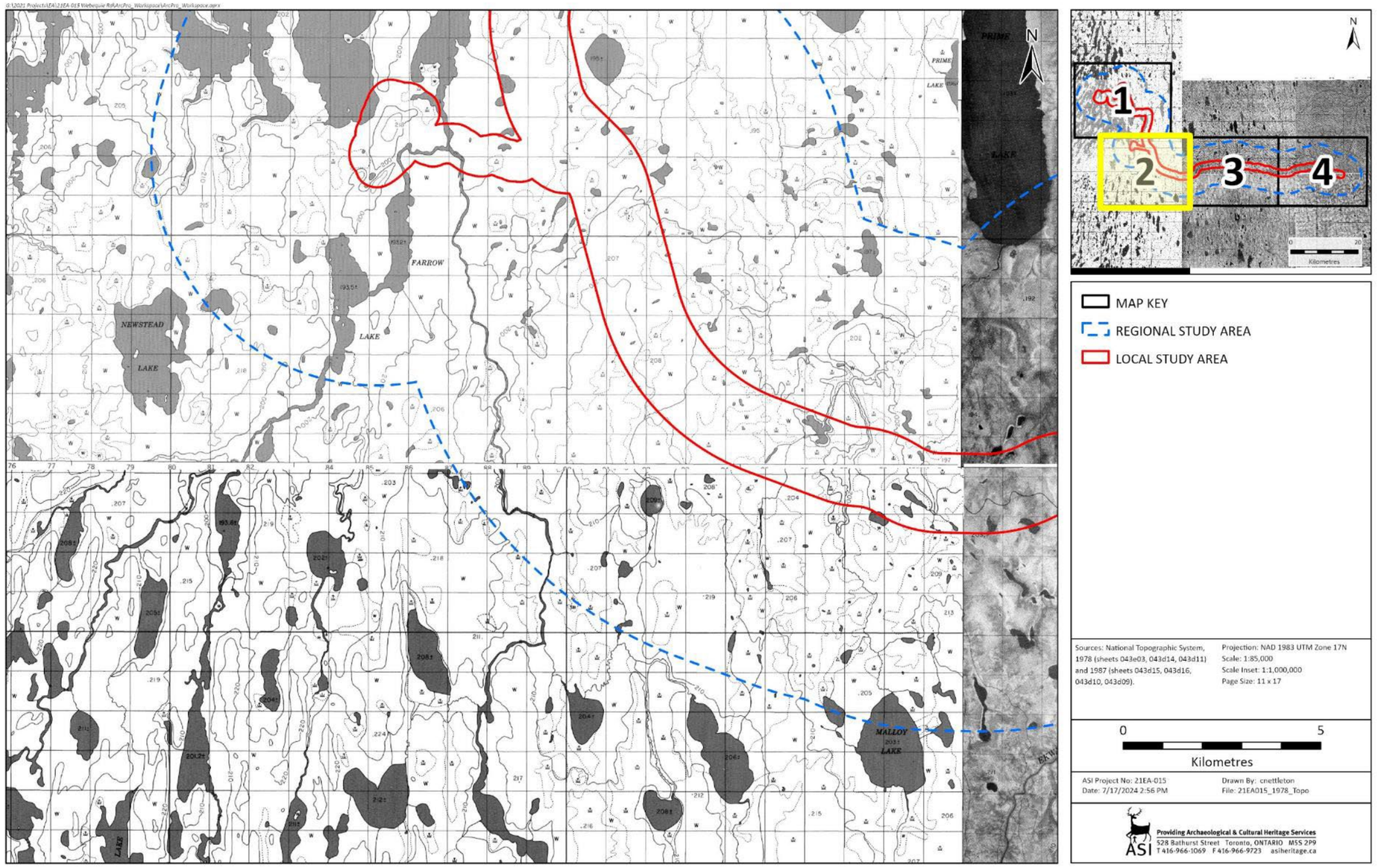


Figure 4: 1978 National Topographic Sheet 043E03 and 043D14



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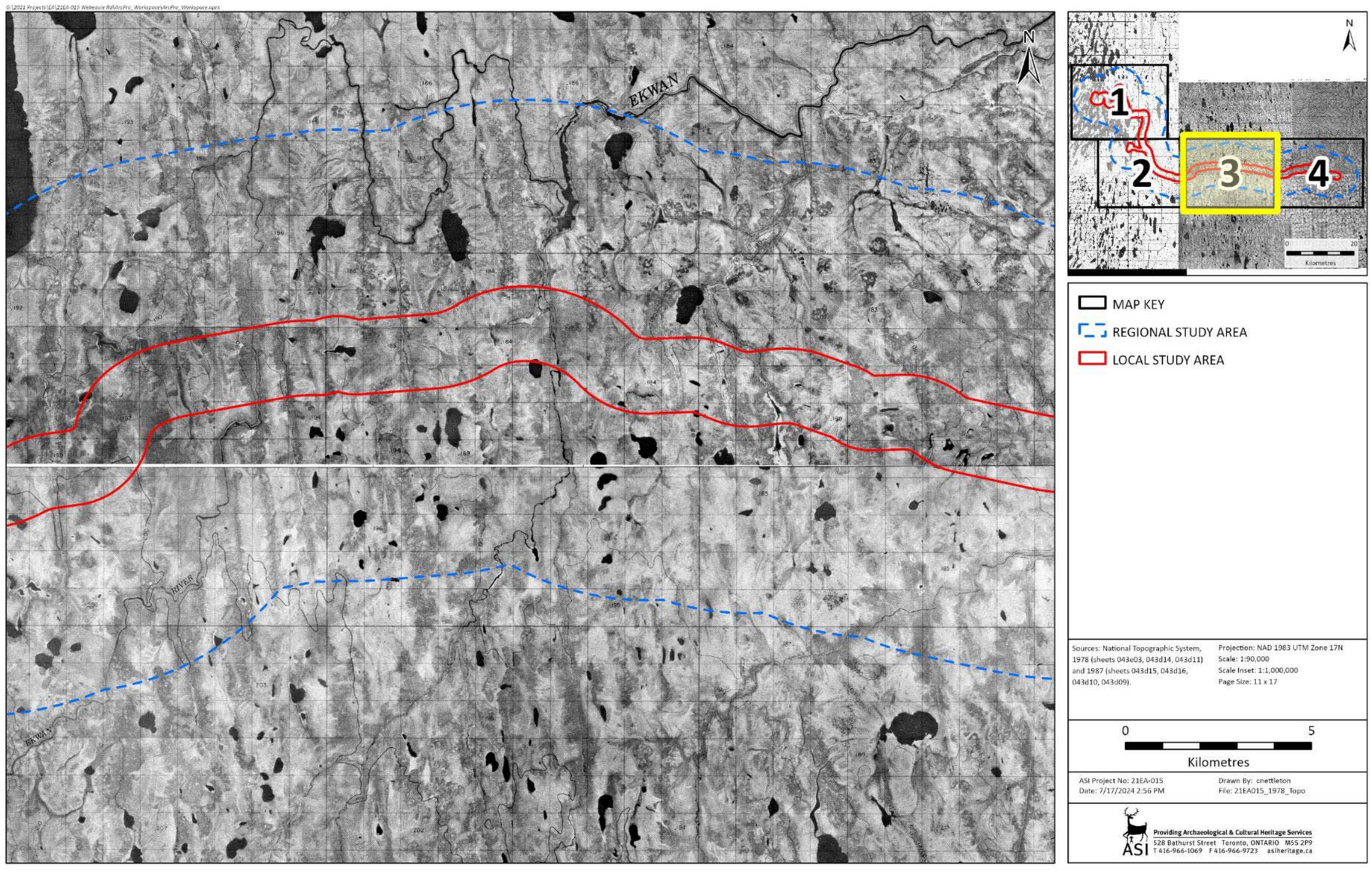

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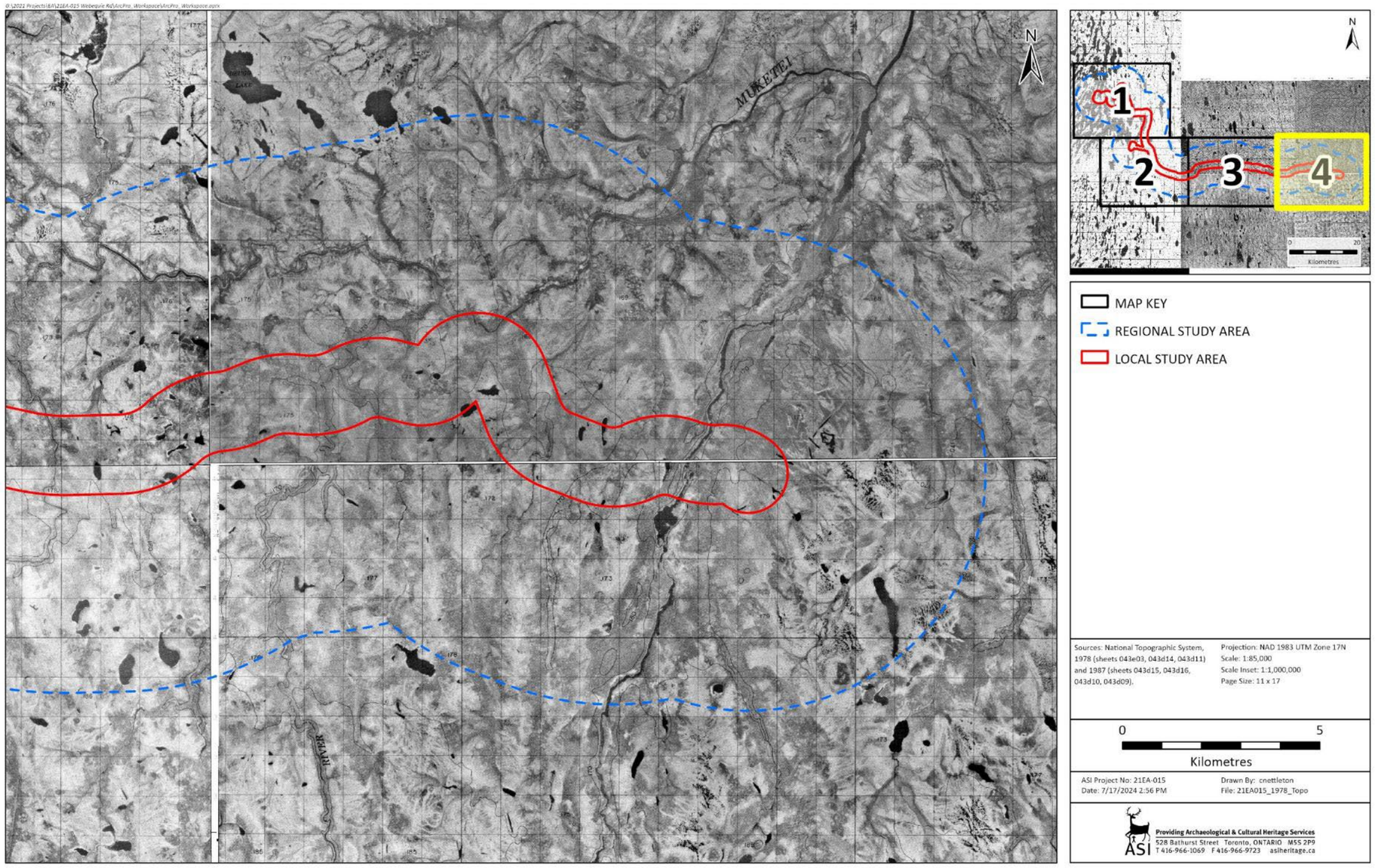

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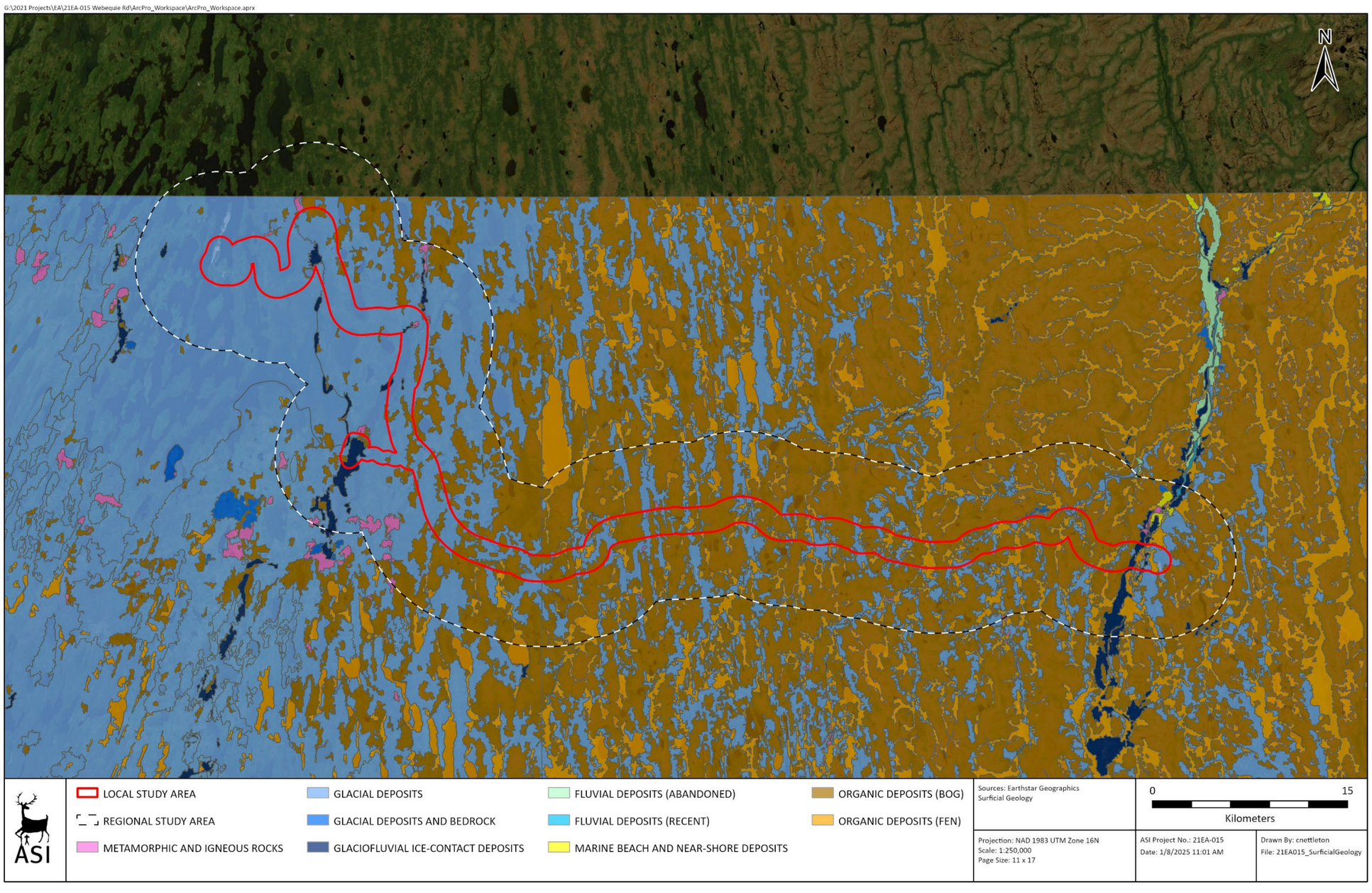

Figure 8: Surficial Geology

Figure 9: Archaeological Potential (Sheet 1 – Segments 1 and 2)

Figure 10: Archaeological Potential (Sheet 2 – Segments 1 and 2)

Figure 11: Archaeological Potential (Sheet 3 – Segments 2 and 3)

Figure 12: Archaeological Potential (Sheet 4 – Segment 3)

Figure 13: Archaeological Potential (Sheet 5 – Segment 3)

Figure 14: Archaeological Potential (Sheet 6 – Segments 3 and 4)