

Abstract Submission for 5th Canadian River Heritage Conference

Title of Presentation:

Inuit Involvement in Heritage River Designation and Management in Nunavut

Category: Community Engagement

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Abstract

The Territory of Nunavut has long been an active member in the Canadian Heritage Rivers program. Its three designated rivers in Nunavut - the Thelon and Kazan Heritage Rivers (1990), the Soper River (1992) were all designated prior to the signing of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement in 1993. The Coppermine River, nominated in 2002, was the first of Nunavut's heritage rivers to be planned and now managed entirely within the Land Claim environment.

While Nunavut's heritage rivers nomination, designation, and management processes have always involved Nunavummiut, the NLCA, Inuit Impact and Benefits Agreements and requirements for joint planning and management committees, provides a legislative framework that obligates Heritage River planners and managers to a negotiated co-management planning and management framework. The implementation of these Land Claim obligations, especially co-management bodies, now provides an opportunity for residents to be more involved in planning and management initiatives at all scales and provides new opportunity for Nunavummiut to both recognize natural and cultural heritage values, and ensure they are considered in larger-scale decision making processes.

This paper considers this changing role of Inuit involvement in Canadian Heritage River nomination, designation, and management, and proposes co-management processes that may be applied beyond the Territory, and beyond Heritage River applications.

Biographical sketch:

Richard Wyma is the Manager, Parks: Program Development with the Government of Nunavut. His responsibilities include park and special place management and planning, heritage appreciation and education, communications and managing the Territory's Canadian Heritage Rivers Program. He is also a PhD Candidate in Landscape Architecture at the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development at the University of Guelph, and is undertaking research based on a Landscape Ecological Analogy for Planning of Place.