



Archaeological Management Plan
Historic Background
Kawartha Lakes Economic Development



Table of Contents

Archaeological Management Plan Historic Background.....	1
Indigenous Occupation.....	1
European Settlement.....	3
The Archaeological Record	6
Select Bibliography.....	7

Archaeological Management Plan Historic Background

The archaeological record in Kawartha Lakes dates back approximately 10,000 to 12,000 and the region in which the City is located contains some of the oldest archaeological sites in Ontario. The area which now comprises the City of Kawartha Lakes forms a portion of the traditional territories of the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabe whose ancestors have lived on the land since the end of the last ice age and who continue to live in the region. The Indigenous archaeological record of the region is rich and contained significant sites that reflect the historic and contemporary Indigenous use and occupation of the land. The seven Williams Treaties First Nations (Alderville First Nation, Beausoleil Island First Nation, Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, Chippewas of Rama First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, and Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation) are the treaty holders for the area of southern and central Ontario which includes Kawartha Lakes, recognizing their historic occupation of the land. Layered on the Indigenous archaeological record is the colonial settler, also known as historic, archaeological record that traces the non-Indigenous presence in the region, which began with transient fur traders, explorers and missionaries in the seventeenth century and intensified with permanent non-Indigenous survey and settlement beginning in the early nineteenth century. The permanent settlements of Kawartha Lakes, including its urban settlements at Lindsay, Fenelon Falls, Bobcaygeon, and Omemee and its rural and agricultural areas and hamlets, were established as part of this non-Indigenous nineteenth century development and have complex and layered histories that can be further understood through the archaeological record.

An understanding of the historic background of the region is integral to understanding the archaeological record and informs the interpretation of artifacts found as part of archaeological assessments in the City. This report provides a brief historic background of the City's development to help understand the types of artifacts that have been and may be found in future in Kawartha Lakes and their relationship to past human occupation of the land.

Indigenous Occupation

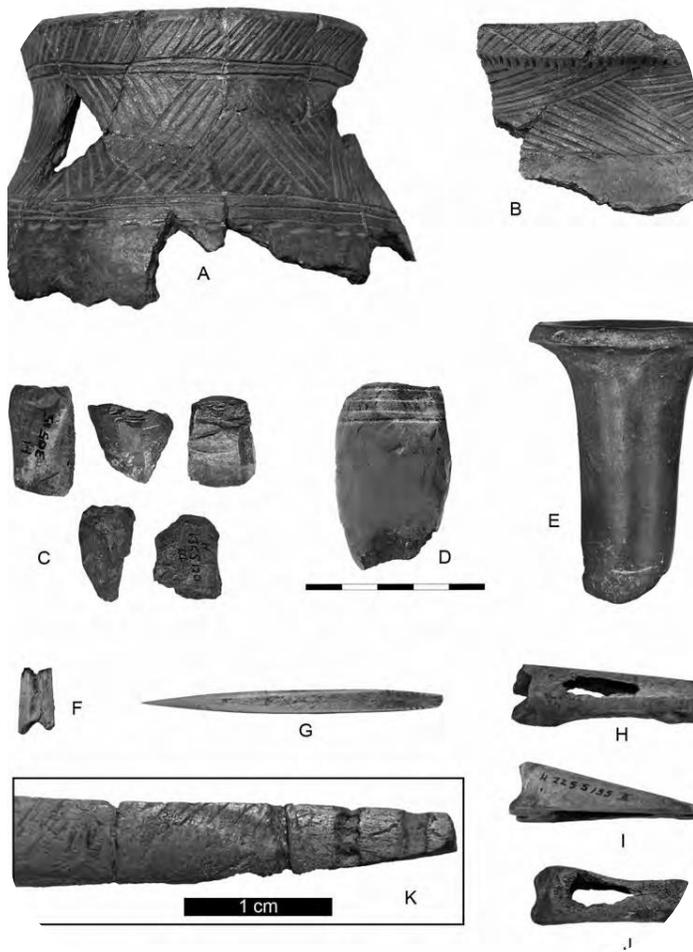
Oral history speaks of the traditional territories of the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabe which extended from the St. Lawrence River along Lake Ontario to Niagara and north along the river systems including the Rideau, Moira, Trent and Credit River watersheds and indicates that Indigenous people lived in the region while the glacial ice was still present. Archaeological data from the Burleigh Falls area of the Trent watershed shows Anishinaabe people were present approximately 12,000 years ago and provides evidence of their continual and traditional occupation of the region. The Michi Saagiig are known as the "people of the big river mouths" and traditionally relied on the fisheries along Lake Ontario and its river mouths in the summer months before travelling north to their wintering grounds in Kawartha Lakes and beyond into northern Ontario where they would hunt and trap in smaller family groupings.



Wild Rice Harvest at Rice Lake, 1921

The Michi Saagiig were a highly mobile people and moved throughout the region, using its waterways as transport routes and travelling significant distances to gather subsistence for their people. The significant waterways through what is now Kawartha Lakes were integral to Michi Saagiig peoples. They did not create permanent settlements or practice agriculture but did establish camps throughout the region, primarily using the maritime landscape with camps on islands, near river mouths, and along shorelines where there was an abundance of fish and game as well as flora, including wild rice. It is important to recognize that the location of the waterways and shorelines has changed over time, both with the natural changes that occurred with the receding glacial ice and with more contemporary non-Indigenous changes to waterways such as damming, which has resulted in Indigenous shorelines sites located both at a distance from contemporary shorelines and under water.

About 500-1000 CE, the Huron-Wendat moved into the region, seeking to establish sedentary agricultural settlements in Michi Saagiig territory; the Huron-Wendat, unlike the Michi Saagiig, were a corn growing people and established permanent villages where they practiced agriculture. Treaties were made between the Huron-Wendat and Michi Saagiig to establish their relationship and grant



Artifacts from the Jameson Site (Wendat)

permission for agricultural settlements to be established throughout the region. This included in Kawartha Lakes where numerous Huron villages were established throughout that period, many of which have been identified through archaeological study. The new corn economy was very successful and the Huron population in the region grew up until the seventeenth century. The Michi Saagiig remained in the region and traded with the Huron, but maintained their traditional mobile lifestyle in contrast with the sedentary lifestyle of the Huron.

The first European presence in Kawartha Lakes occurred in the early seventeenth century as part of the French exploration of what is now Ontario and their incursions into Huronia. This early European presence was transitory as French explorers and Jesuit missionaries passed through the Trent system throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, establishing contacts and relationships with the Huron in this area, and with the Haudenosaunee to the south. The Michi Saagiig began to retreat to their more northerly traditional wintering grounds at this time as the presence of

Europeans in the area began to sever and disrupt the historic relationships between Indigenous communities in southern Ontario. The resultant conflict between the Haudenosaunee, who at that time were allied with the English who had begun the colonization of the United States, and the Huron-Wendat, who were allied with the French, and introduction of European diseases decimated the Huron-Wendat who mostly retreated to Quebec in the second half of the seventeenth century, abandoning their villages throughout Kawartha Lakes and the surrounding region. By the eighteenth century, the Michi Saagiig, who had chiefly avoided the conflicts of the seventeenth century, returned to their traditional lands in Kawartha Lakes as its primary Indigenous occupants.

European Settlement

Permanent European settlement in the area did not occur until the early nineteenth century. Following the War of 1812, colonial authorities sought to open up new lands to the north of the Lake Ontario waterfront townships and, in 1818, signed the Rice Lake Treaty (Treaty 20) at Port Hope which ceded nearly 2 million acres of Michi Saagiig territory for non-Indigenous settlement, pushing



Anne Langton, Log House near Blythe, c.1838

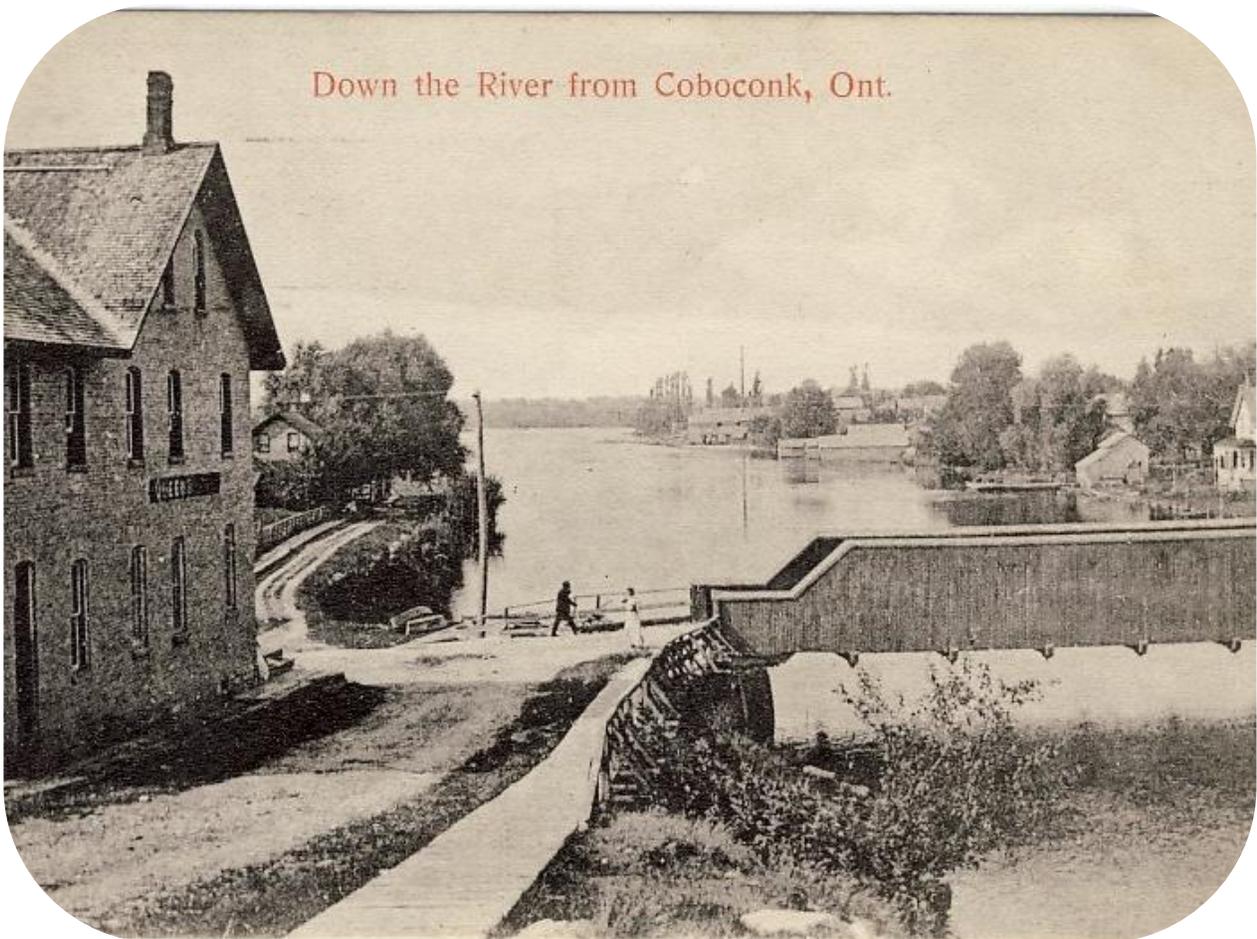
Indigenous communities off their land and eventually onto reserves to make way for agricultural clearing and settlement. The earliest non-Indigenous settlers arrived in the southern townships soon after this time, although surveying had actually begun prior to the treaty, beginning with the survey of Manvers Township in 1816. Settlement followed quickly after survey throughout the 1820s, including the clearing of lands for farms and the establishment of early town sites and industry; Lindsay, for example, was established beginning in the late 1820s with the erection of a grist and sawmill on the Scugog River. Development continued throughout the nineteenth century with the establishment of farms, communities and industries, particularly the substantial logging industry in the north, throughout the county. This included the establishment of Victoria County as a municipal entity in 1861 and of Lindsay as its county seat.

The settlement in Kawartha Lakes proceeded from south to north and the historic settlement areas of the southern townships are typically older than those in the northern townships. This reflects the gradual expansion of the frontier of settlement from Lake Ontario northward as the colonial government demanded more land for increasing non-Indigenous settlement in Ontario. It also reflects the natural and geographic conditions of the region, where the southern townships were both more abundant agriculturally and more easily connected to settlements outside of Kawartha Lakes, such as Cobourg, Port Hope and Peterborough, whereas the northern townships were both more remote and poorer agricultural land. Non-Indigenous settlement also stayed close to the region's many waterways which provided vital for transportation, subsistence and the growth of localized

industries including saw and grist mills which were integral to the ability of non-Indigenous people to built communities and often formed the nucleus of new communities. The region at this time also boasted a substantial rail network, centred in Lindsay and beginning in the 1850s, which connected the growing communities and allowed for the passage of both people and goods in and out of Kawartha Lakes.

By the turn of the twentieth century, the present-day communities in Kawartha Lakes had largely been established, with the southern and central portions of the county primarily used for agriculture and the northern areas used more heavily for logging alongside some farming. Large industrial uses had also become established by this period, particularly in larger settlements at Lindsay, Fenelon Falls, Bobcaygeon and Omemee; these industrial uses encompassed a wide range of products, from lumber products to agricultural implements and machinery to brickworks to woollen mills and typically made use of local natural resources. This period also marked the beginnings of the region's growing tourist economy and the increase in settlement and construction along lakeshores and transportation through its waterways to support the growing number of seasonal and recreational visitors.

One of the core differences in the human geography of the region at this time, when compared with the present day, was the more highly dispersed nature of the population, particularly in the



Coboconk, Late 19th century

numerous rural hamlets that arose in the late nineteenth century and disappeared as part of the rural exodus that characterized the first half of the twentieth century. Hamlets such as Port Hoover, Fleetwood and Corson's Siding were thriving communities in the nineteenth century but had largely disappeared by the middle of the nineteenth century as rural residents began to move into larger centres with the consolidation of services and jobs in larger communities including the City's urban centres as well as villages like Bethany, Oakwood and Coboconk. This shifting human geography meant that many nineteenth century communities disappeared, but left behind archaeological evidence of their historic presence.

The Archaeological Record

The historic occupation of Kawartha Lakes informs its archaeological record and the type and location of archaeological resources within the City. The majority of known archaeological sites in Kawartha Lakes are Indigenous in origin which reflects the long presence of Indigenous people on this land and their traditional land use. Known Indigenous sites in Kawartha Lakes include both Michi Saagiig and Huron sites that demonstrates their differing land use and settlement patterns. A significant portion of these sites are in close proximity to water as is to be expected, particularly with regard to Michi Saagiig sites where their historic reliance on the region's waterways was a central aspect of their livelihoods. As is noted above, the shifting shoreline from the retreat of the glacial ice and change in climate in the post-glacial period and from non-Indigenous engineering works means that sites that were once on the shoreline may be either located at a further distance from water than they were originally or may be under water. It is anticipated that significant Indigenous archaeological resources will continue to be identified through archaeological assessments and their identification and interpretation informed through oral and written history that recognizes historic Indigenous occupation and land use.



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The non-Indigenous settler history of Kawartha Lakes is also underscored by its archaeological record. The existing towns and villages in Kawartha Lakes date back to the early to mid-nineteenth century and each have their own archaeological record that tracks their growth from early settlement sites to larger concentrated communities within a large rural area. Similarly, the rural areas of Kawartha

Lakes retain evidence of agricultural uses which continue in many areas, alongside smaller rural hamlets and rural industrial uses that have largely disappeared. Like Indigenous communities, settler communities relied heavily on the region's waterways, but also, through early nineteenth century surveys, established patterns of settlement that were less aligned with the natural landscape with lots of concessions, new roadways and rail lines. As a result, these manmade features become significant features in understanding where archaeological resources may be found in Kawartha Lakes.

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