

B.12.0 HERITAGE AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The plan area and resource evaluation area contain heritage resources related to First Nations, as well as early settlement, oil and gas exploration and coal development. First Nations' cultural areas and traditional use have not yet been addressed (see Chapter B.2.0) and are not included in this section.

Significant fossil localities and potential are known to exist within the plan area and resource evaluation area.

Issues:

- Significant heritage and paleontological resources need to be maintained
- There are privacy issues associated with accessing information concerning known sites on Crown land: balancing the need for confidentiality with the requirement to consider known sites in resource development
- Data collection methodology, definitions and management are not consistent
- The knowledge base concerning paleontological and heritage resources is incomplete
- There is increased interest in collecting fossils and cultural artifacts, including commercial tours
- There is potential for loss of fossils and cultural artifacts from the region, including illicit trade
- Potential scientific value of fossils and cultural artifacts is not always well realized

Intent:

- Conserve significant heritage and paleontological resources
- Maintain confidentiality of heritage and paleontological information
- Maintain or enhance economic opportunities based on heritage and paleontological resources subject to conserving the resource base

Best management practices:

- *Protocol agreements for the management of cultural heritage resources between MSRM and Ministry of Forests and MSRM and the Oil and Gas Commission*

Economic benefits and opportunities:

- Research and education
- Heritage and paleontological tours
- Interpretive facilities
- Restoration projects

Measures of success:

- Public and resource users who are knowledgeable about heritage and paleontological resources and the need to treat them with respect
- Effective mitigation measures incorporated into resource development proposals
- Sites designated under the *Heritage Conservation Act*
- Sustainable commercial ventures with a heritage or paleontological theme