



LESSON SUMMARY

Students will participate in role playing in a public forum where decisions about forest harvesting will be debated

Activity Information

- Estimated Duration:** Two class periods (one for discussion and class work, with homework; one for student presentations)
- Materials:** *Who's Responsible Scenario, Scenario Map, Interest Group Role Playing Cards*, flip chart paper, markers and/or pencil crayons
- Setting:** Indoors
- Key Vocabulary:** Ecosystem, industry, pulp, interest group



Teacher Preparation

Photocopy the *Who's Responsible Scenario* and the *Scenario Map* – one set per team of students. Photocopy and cut out copies of the *Interest Group Role Playing Cards* so that each team can have a different card.

ACTIVITY

Step 1 Initiate a class discussion about the importance of forests and forest products to Canada. Ask your students why they believe forests are important to them, their local community, the Province of Ontario and Canada. Put their answers on the blackboard. The list of what forests provide may include some of these values:

- Shade
- Wildlife habitat
- Cool streams for fish
- Pulp and paper
- Recreational opportunities
- Maple syrup
- Hunting and fishing opportunities
- Trails for hiking and riding
- Road access
- Employment

Ask students to review the list and determine if there are any values that conflict with one another. For example, forests supply pulp and paper, but if an area of the forest is cut, that may reduce tourism potential in this region.

Step 2 Ask students to generate a list of questions they would need to consider before making decisions about how to manage a forested area. Possible questions might be:

- How large is the forested area?
- How many trees are in the forest?
- What species of trees are in the forested area? (e.g. coniferous or deciduous, maple, birch, poplar, fir)
- How large are the trees? (e.g. saplings, seedlings, mature trees)
- What other plant and animal species depend on the forested area as habitat?
- Are these trees valuable to the ecosystem or are they relatively unimportant?

Step 3 Divide the class into teams. Hand out the *Who's Responsible Scenario* sheets and *Scenario Map* – one set per team. Ask the students to read these and then do a quick recap with them, ensuring that they understand what the scenario is and what is expected of them. All the students will work together to form a response to the proposed logging activity. Ask each team to select which interest group they wish to represent – the Mayor and Town Council, the Environment Club, the Anglers and Hunters Club, etc.

Remind students that they will work together within each team to assess their priorities, given the interest group role they have chosen to assume. The members of each team will brainstorm to come up with a series of arguments in support of their interest group's point of view. They must then prepare for the upcoming public meeting. This preparation will include an oral and visual presentation, with each team member providing some portion of the presentation.

Step 4 Provide the student teams with adequate in-class time to discuss their scenarios and to generate a list of points/concerns they wish to raise at the public meeting. There are two options for this activity:

- **OPTION ONE - Single Class Period Activity** Give the teams about 30 minutes to discuss their opinions and concerns about the harvesting activities and to prepare a quick presentation for the public meeting. Then have each team present its preferred option for whether or not the logging activity should be allowed to take place, followed by the rationale for that opinion. Ensure that each member of the team has a role in the presentation. After the presentations, have the class vote by secret ballot, to determine whether or not the company will be allowed to expand its operations.
- **OPTION TWO - Two (or more) Class Period Activity** Give teams some in-class time to discuss their point of view and outline their concerns. Then assign the presentation as homework, asking the teams to prepare a formal presentation, ten minutes in length, for the public meeting. If you choose this option, the public meeting can be more formal. Before the presentations, ask each team to delegate one member to step out and become part of the **Public Forest Advisory Committee**. This committee will make a recommendation at the end of all the presentations as to what it believes the forest company should do.

Each presentation for the longer activity should include a large map of the area, with details that outline the anticipated impacts and outcomes of the expanded logging activities, as they relate to each team's interest group. Following all of the presentations, allow the **Public Forest Advisory Committee** members time to quietly discuss their ideas. A representative of the committee will present the results to the rest of the public meeting attendees, the students.

You can also conduct a secret ballot with all the students to determine the preferred decision of the class. Announce the results at the end of the vote.

Step 5 Hold the public meeting. Depending on the amount of class time available, the future actions of the company can be determined through a secret ballot vote by all the students in the class, or by the members of the **Public Forest Advisory Committee**.

Evaluation

Have students prepare a summary opinion piece that outlines all the perspectives of the individual teams and explains why the students believe the class vote (or **Public Forest Advisory Committee** vote) reached the outcome it did.

Extensions

Have students research actual issues that are being discussed locally by reading the newspaper, locating information on the Internet or watching TV. Issues may involve other aspects of forest management, such as parks and recreation/conservation areas, new housing developments, recreational areas and trails, or wildlife management issues.

Imagine that you are living in the town of High Creek, in northern Ontario. High Creek is a small but scenic community, located near a variety of lakes – Bear Lake, Loon Lake and Little Lake. The lakes and surrounding area provide an active recreational lifestyle for community members and also provide significant opportunities for recreational tourism and eco-tourism. People visit the High Creek area to hunt, fish, paddle, hike and explore the wilderness.

A growing community, High Creek has a wide assortment of interest groups. The Environment Club is knowledgeable and interested in any activities that may impact the natural environment. The Snowmobilers Club wants to expand and provides its membership with detailed maps of the region. Those maps are also sold at Bear Lake Lodge, the major tourist lodge and outfitter in the area; as well, they are promoted by the Anglers and Hunters Club.

The major industry and the main source of employment for the community, is the local paper mill. Lakeview Forest Products Inc. owns and operates this mill. The company prides itself on its environmental stewardship of the local forests and its strong commitment to involving the local community in its forest management decision-making.

The community is closely linked to the company through a Public Forest Advisory Committee. Members of this committee represent a cross-section of groups and individuals in the community. They provide input and consultation for the company's forest management decision-making process.

The company is currently harvesting trees in a forest stand approximately 60 kilometres from the town, hauling logs back to the paper mill by truck. According to the company forest managers, cutting in this area will be completed in six months. The company's forest regeneration plan is already being implemented, with both aerial seeding and direct planting. This area will be left to grow and will not be available for future harvesting for another 80 years.

The company has developed a comprehensive forest management plan for another area adjacent to the one that is currently being harvested. This new area is large enough to keep the mill supplied with trees for the next 15 years. A road would be built to access the area and to remove the harvested trees.

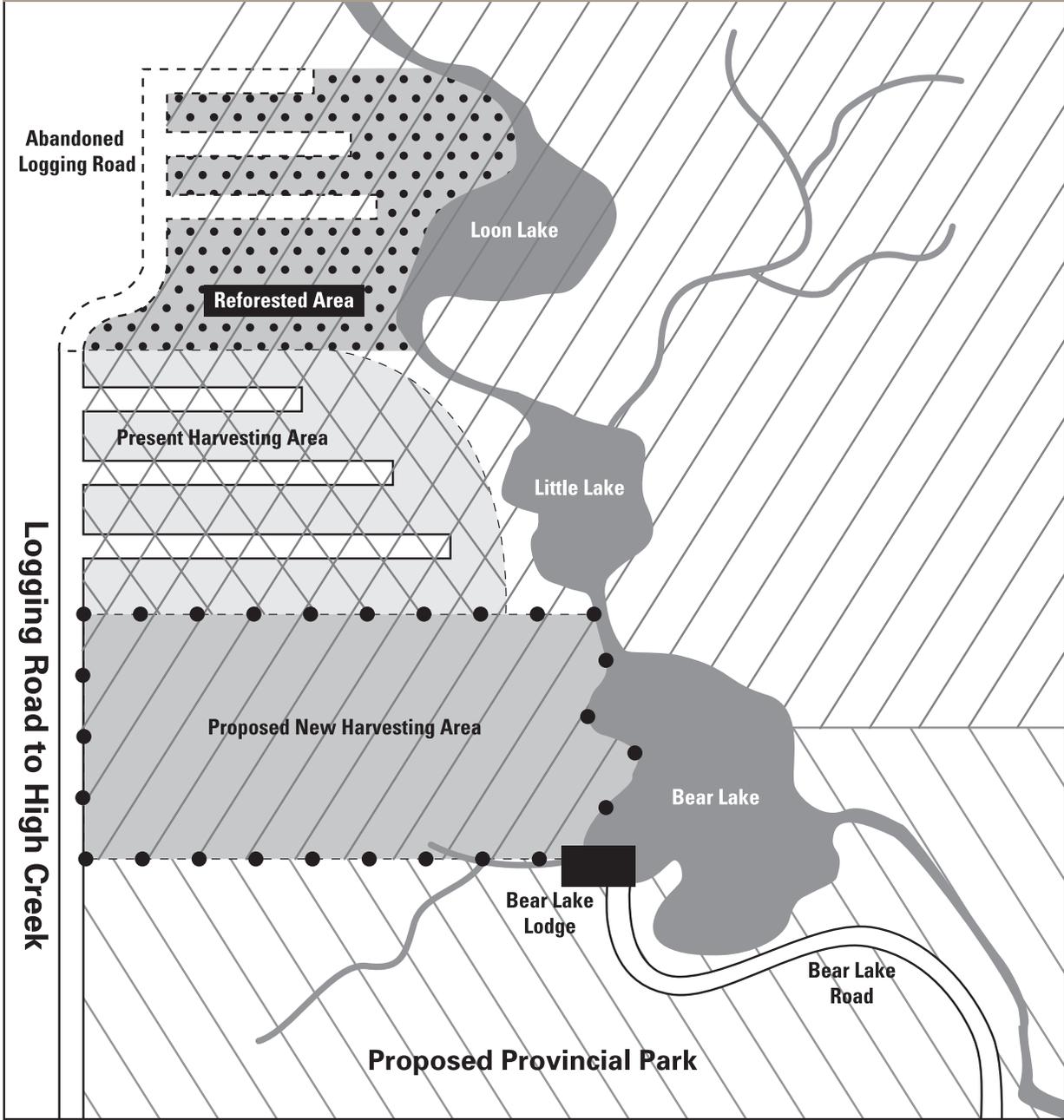
The Environment Club has been trying to get the Ontario government to make this same area a provincial park. There are currently no roads in this area, which covers approximately 5,000 square kilometres.

At an upcoming public meeting, representatives from key community interest groups can express their opinions about the new harvesting plan to the company's Public Forest Advisory Committee. This committee will then give direction to the company as to whether or not it should proceed with its plan.

There are ten interest groups that wish to make a presentation at the public meeting:

- Town Council of High Creek
- High Creek Tourist Association
- Anglers and Hunters Club
- Snowmobilers Club
- Environment Club
- Murphy Trucking Company
- Bear Lake Lodge
- First Nations Council
- Lakeview Forest Products Inc.
- High Creek Business Association

SCENARIO MAP



INTEREST GROUP ROLE PLAYING CARDS

Lakeview Forest Products Inc.

Speaker: Company President

Points to emphasize:

Environment Club

Speaker: Club President

Points to emphasize:

Town Council of High Creek

Speaker: Mayor

Points to emphasize:

First Nations Council

Speaker: Head of Council

Points to emphasize:

INTEREST GROUP ROLE PLAYING CARDS

Anglers and Hunters Club

Speaker: Club President

Points to emphasize:

Murphy Trucking Company

Speaker: Company President

Points to emphasize:

Snowmobilers Club

Speaker: Club President

Points to emphasize:

Bear Lake Lodge

Speaker: Lodge Owner

Points to emphasize:

INTEREST GROUP ROLE PLAYING CARDS

High Creek Business Assoc.

Speaker: Chairperson

Points to emphasize:

High Creek Tourist Assoc.

Speaker: Chairperson

Points to emphasize:
