

TRCM Research Strategy

TRCM Independent Research Mandate:

The following Treaty Research Strategy arises out of the research mandate of the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba. The Memorandum of Agreement between the Crown and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (2005) mandates and outlines the research responsibilities of the Treaty Relations Commission as follows:

2.0 Purpose:

- 2.2 *The parties agree to strengthen, rebuild and enhance the treaty relationship and mutual respect as envisioned by the treaty parties.*
- 2.3 *The parties will work cooperatively with the Treaty Relations Commission to achieve the objectives set out in paragraph 2.2 to:*
 - 2.3.2 *Conduct independent and focused research to advance discussions of treaty related issues;*

5.0 Role of Treaty Relations Commission

- 5.3 *Without restricting the mandate of the Treaty Relations Commission or Commissioner, understandings of Treaty issues that may be explored by the Parties, through oral history, traditional knowledge and archival information, include, but are not limited to, the following Treaty related issues:*
 - 5.3.1 *Social issues including: child & family, education, housing & health;*
 - 5.3.2 *Governance;*
 - 5.3.3 *Adherents to Treaties;*
 - 5.3.4 *Any other treaty-related issue as agreed upon by the Parties; and*
 - 5.3.5 *The inclusion of subject matter is without prejudice to the respective position of the Parties on the content, scope or existence of any Treaty Right or any assertion by a First Nation that they are covered by any existing Treaty.*
- 5.4 *The parties will agree on the order of priority in which treaty issues referred to in 5.3 will be discussed.*
- 5.5 *The Treaty Relations Commission will conduct independent research on the treaty related issues in accordance with paragraph 5.4. The Treaty Relations Commission will prepare reports required by this agreement and as agreed to by the parties.*

6.0 The Role of the Treaty Commissioner

- 6.2 *The Treaty Commissioner will direct the Treaty Relations Commission in exercising its mandate to perform work including but not limited to the following:*
 - 6.2.3 *conducting focused research to further the treaty discussion as agreed to by the parties.*

The research activities of the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba is also developed to support the public education and facilitation mandate, and the development of the Treaty Relations Commission's, Manitoba Treaties Resource Centre.

TRCM Research Projects:

The first research project the TRCM embarked on is the **Manitoba Treaties Oral History Research Project** in partnership with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. In the 2007-2008 fiscal year the TRCM developed a four year research strategy to meet the independent research and public education mandate of the TRCM. At the beginning of the 2007-2008 fiscal year our research strategy proposal was approved by the Treaty Partners. It is based on the research priority areas identified by the TRCM through consultation with the Treaty Parties, AMC General Chiefs' Assemblies, the AMC-TRCM Elders Advisory Council, the 2007 Treaty Researchers Think Tank, and through the Treaty Commissioner's community visits conducted during the previous year. The consultative process resulted in the identification of five research priority areas and within each of these priority areas we developed 11 long term and short term research project proposals.

Livelihood

- 1) Livelihood I: Conceptions, Intent, and Context (documentary accounts)
- 2) Livelihood II: Conceptions, Intent, and Context (oral accounts)
- 3) Treaty Right to Agriculture
- 4) Manitoba Treaty First Nations Atlas Project

Crown-First Nation Treaty Relations

- 5) The Treaty Relationship I: Nature and Scope (documentary accounts)
- 6) The Treaty Relationship II: Nature and Scope (oral accounts)
- 7) A Review of the Dakota Oyate Experience in Manitoba

Treaty Provisions, Implementation and Interpretation

- 8) Treaty Provisions: Oral and Written Accounts
- 9) Socio-economic Foundations and the Treaty Relationship

Manitoba First Nation Traditional Knowledge and Practices

- 10) Traditional Approaches to Treaty Making

Treaty Research: Methodological Issues

- 11) Treaty Research Methodologies: Review and Analysis

In addition to the above Treaty research priority based research projects the TRCM proposes four ancillary projects to support its Treaty Research Mandate:

- 12) Treaty Knowledge Inventory
- 13) A Visual History of the Treaties in Manitoba
- 14) An Inventory of Commissioned Research Reports on Treaty Issues
- 15) Treaty Researchers' Think Tank II: Academics and Elders

Three long term projects were approved and initiated in 2007-2008 fiscal year:

Livelihood:

Treaty Right to Agriculture
Historical Atlas of First Nations in Manitoba
Treaty Right to Livelihood I and II

During the 2008-2009 fiscal year these projects continued and another four short term projects were initiated:

Crown—First Nations Relations:

Dakota Oyate Experience in Manitoba

Treaty Provisions, Implementation and Interpretation:

Treaty Provisions: Oral and Written Accounts

Manitoba First Nation Traditional Knowledge and Practices:

Traditional Approaches to Treaty Making

In addition to these research projects, the TRCM has embarked on four ancillary projects that arise from and support the Treaty Research Mandate and the major research projects:

A Visual History of the Treaties in Manitoba
Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba—Commissioned Reports

Each of these research projects are described in more depth below. It is important to note that the TRCM-AMC Elders Advisory Council plays a significant and active role in the research strategy and activities through their monthly meetings, and in meetings and Think Tanks with the researchers. In all the research being conducted by the TRCM one of the primary objectives is to bring First Nations' oral history and conventional research findings together to help bridge the gap and help us all reach common understandings of the Treaties.

Manitoba Treaties Oral History Research Project

The Oral History Project was the first research project the TRCM embarked on. It was initiated by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Framework Agreement Initiative in 2006, then in the summer of 2006 the TRCM entered into a protocol agreement with the AMC to collaborate. To date, over 150 Treaty First Nation and Dakota Elders have participated in this project through 13 Treaty Region Focus Groups, seven Community Forums, and 40 follow-up interviews (to date). The results of the research consists of over 200 hours of recordings which are currently being translated and transcribed. It is important to note that each of the focus groups, community forums and individual follow-up interviews were conducted in the traditional languages of the Elders.

2006	Focus Group #1	Treaty 1, 2, 4 Adhesion @ Clear Lake: Skownan, Pine Creek, O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi, Waywayseecappo, Ebb & Flo, Keeseekoowenin, Rolling River, Sandy Bay.
	FG #2	Treaty 1 @ Powerview: Brokenhead, Sagkeeng, Sandy Bay, Peguis, Long Plain
2007	FG #3	Treaty 5 @ Gimli: Fisher River, Jackhead, Berens River, Hollow Water
	FG #4	Treaty 2 @ The Narrows
	FG #5	Dakota Nations @ Brandon: Birdtail, Sioux Valley, Canupawakpa, Dakota Tipi, Dakota Plains
	FG #6	Treaty No. 5 Adhesion, Island Lake Bands @ St. Theresa Point
	FG #7	Misipawistik, Island Lake, Wasagamak, St. Theresa Point
	Community Forum #1	Treaty No. 5, Swampy Cree @ Opaskwayak
	FG #8	Grand Rapids, Opaskwayak, Mosakahiken, Chemawawin
		Treaty No. 3, Buffalo Point @ Buffalo Point
	FG #9	Treaty No. 5 Adhesions, Keewatin Cree @ Thompson
		Fox Lake, God's Lake Narrow, Manto Sipi, Bunibonibee, York Factory, War Lake
	CF #2	Treaty No. 6 Adhesions, Cree @ Opaskwayak
	CF #3	Mathias Colomb, Marcel Colomb, Okawamithikani
	FG #10	Treaty No. 10, Northlands Dene @ Thompson
		Treaty No. 10, Barren Lands Cree @ Thompson
		Treaty No. 5 South & East, Anishnaabe @ Powerview
		Bloodvein, Black River, Paungassi, Little Grand Rapids
2008	FG #11	Treaty No. 5 Adhesion, Cree, @ Thompson
	FG #12	Shamattawa, Nischawayasihk, O-Pipon-Na-Piwin, Tataskweyak
	FG #13	Treaty 1 @ Long Plain
	CF #4	Treaty 4 Adhesion @ Daupin: Sapotaweyak, Wuskwi Sipihk
	CF #5	Treaty No. 5 Adhesion @ Thompson: Sayisi Dene @ Thompson
	CF #6	Treaty No. 5, Cross Lake @ Cross Lake
	CF #7	Treaty No. 1, Long Plain, Roseau River, Swan Lake
		Urban Treaty Elders @ Winnipeg [all Treaties & Dakota representation]

The kind of knowledge shared by the Elders in each of the focus groups and community forums is relative to their unique collective experiences and the contemporary issues they are dealing with. However, the following themes consistently arise at each session: The Creator's gifts; the Peoples' responsibilities; who we are; relations with the land; livelihood; inherent rights; relations with each other; sacred teachings; understandings of the Treaty Relationship and promises; Treaty grievances (restrictions, interference, relocations, impacts of development; loss of lands, residential schools etc.); and, the revival and continuance of traditional knowledge and skills.

It is anticipated that the final report on this project will be complete by summer 2009. The knowledge gathered in this project will be also utilized in other research projects conducted by this office and will be included in a number of publications the TRCM is planning produce in the next few years. The first books will be a series of four

volumes entitled *Treaty Elders' Teachings* which will be published by AUPress at Athabasca University. Each volume has a different theme: volume 1 *Our Relations to the Land*; Volume 2 *Who We Are*; Volume 3 *Our Relations with Newcomers*; and Volume 4 *We are All Treaty People: Our Treaty Relationship*. We anticipate the first volume will be going to press in the spring of 2009.

The Oral History Project includes two ancillary projects. The first is the "Existing Oral History Collections" project which consists of collecting, inventorying and studying oral history tapes, videos and transcripts that have already been done. We are finding these materials in libraries and archives but are most grateful to the many individuals who have come forward and donated copies of the interviews conducted with their Elders and older relatives over the years. This project will continue over the next fiscal year and we look forward to more individuals sharing their oral history collections with us.

The second ancillary project is the "Historical Photographs Collection" project which consists of researching, collecting and inventorying historical photographs of First Nations that depict the Treaty relationship within the boundaries of present-day Manitoba. So far hundreds of photographs have been collected from different archives and libraries around the province, some have been donated by individuals, and more will be collected from archives outside the province of Manitoba during the summer of 2008. The materials gathered through both of these ancillary projects will be used in the reports of the Oral History Project and other TRCM undertakings. For example, for the web site, public education materials and other TRCM research projects.

All donations and inquiries regarding these ancillary projects can be made to Darren Courchene, Treaty Relations Researcher, at the AMC Winnipeg office, 956-0610.

(1) Treaty Right to Agriculture

The Treaty Right to Agriculture research project is a comprehensive study beginning with traditional and pre-Treaty First Nations' agricultural practices, the spirit and intent of the agricultural promises and provisions in the Treaties, and Treaty implementation past and present. Through an analysis of documentary records and oral history accounts this research project addresses a wide range of questions and issues surrounding the agricultural provisions and promises of the numbered Treaties in the present-day province of Manitoba.

The scope of this research project is large as we are striving to cover the entire province of Manitoba and First Nations from all seven Treaties as well as the Dakota Nations. To ensure thoroughness this is a four year research project.

2007-2008 Phase I Report:

During Phase I we contracted the research services Dr. Carl Beal and Dr. Sarah Carter to review existing studies on First Nations agriculture in Manitoba to determine what the state of knowledge is and what additional research needs to be conducted. To date, two research reports have been submitted: Dr. Carl Beal, "The Manitoba Treaties and the Adoption of Agriculture," (121 pages plus appendices), and Dr. Sarah Carter and Eric Strikwerda, "Report on First Nations Agricultural Activities From Earliest Times To The Numbered Treaties" (177 pages).

Both reports provide excellent overviews on existing studies and identify a large number of gaps that need to be addressed in order for us to gain a more thorough understanding of First Nations and agriculture over time. The reports identified that there has been no comprehensive and/or comparative study of the Treaty agricultural promises and provisions in Manitoba, nor has there been any studies focused on Treaty implementation. Their analyses of the gaps in the literature were used to develop a larger research work plan which includes the development of research grant applications to help cover the costs of more in-depth archival and oral history research. Drs. Sarah Carter and Winona Wheeler are taking the lead on this project.

(2) Historical Atlas of First Nations in Manitoba

The Historical Atlas is by far the largest project the TRCM is embarking on with the largest number of researchers and resources required. The Historical Atlas was identified as an excellent means to educate the public at large on the historical and contemporary experiences of First Nations in this province and First Nations relations with the land. The Elders explain that connection to homeland is at the heart of First Nations worldviews. Maps combined with visual images and graphics are especially helpful in conveying First Nations perspectives and relations over time because the Manitoba landscape is a storied place. First Nations knowledge is found in their oral traditions and embedded in the landscape itself. The Elders remind us that the Treaties between First Nations and the Crown are the foundation of the relationship between First Nations and all other Canadians.

By focusing on human-land relations over time based on Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, the *Historical Atlas of Treaty First Nations in Manitoba* promises to make a significant contribution towards enhancing the Treaty relationship between First Nations and other Canadians. It is important to note that no other Atlas of this nature and scope has ever been done before.

The Historical Atlas is a three year research project (though it may take up to four years) that is drawing upon the expertise of university-based and community scholars and in partnership with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and Indian and Northern Affairs. The goal is to produce a comprehensive multidisciplinary atlas with an accompanying teachers' guide and interactive web site that will explore the nature of First Nations-land relations and First Nation relations with other Manitobans in the territories now encompassed by the province of Manitoba, from pre-contact to the present.

The scope of this research project is extensive to accommodate the geographical expanse, ecological diversity, cultural diversity of First Nations and Manitobans, the range of perspectives and contexts, and the time span under study. As a multidisciplinary study it will consider existing published and unpublished studies and will engage in new research using western and Indigenous knowledge that include; traditional teachings, ecology, oral histories, geography, history, archaeology, anthropology, sociology, political, and religious studies, linguistics and more.

The Historical Atlas project is well underway. In addition to working closely with the AMC-TRCM Elders Advisory Council we also have an informal committee made up of university and community-based researchers who are committed to contributing to this project from: the Universities of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Saskatchewan, Athabasca,

Alberta; Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research Centre; Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre; and the Manitoba Museum. Manitoba Hydro also provided support by contributing towards the salary of a project coordinator, Debra Laliberte.

Over the last year two ‘Elders and Researchers Think Tanks’ were conducted to develop the vision and the research strategy in November 15-17, 2007 and January 17-19, 2008. The Elders provided much guidance to the researchers on all aspects of the Atlas project development, content, and research methods. During the Think Tanks we conducted workshops on what kinds of knowledge about the land and people the atlas will contain, what each of us can contribute, how we envisioning the atlas, and management and organization.

To date, two subcommittees have developed the ethical research guidelines and vision for the project, a number of research grant applications have been submitted (one already approved), and Research Assistant Joel Edye-Rowntree completed an inventory and report on existing studies, resource data bases, resource people, and has assisted in acquiring relevant materials to support this project for the TRCM Resource Centre. We also have a series of base maps to work with that emphasize Treaty regions rather than provincial boundaries, and waterways rather than highways. The project researchers will be drawing from their own research areas and interests and we are inviting others to contribute as well. An editorial board for the project is being developed from among the researchers and Drs. Frank Tough and Winona Wheeler are taking on the responsibilities of lead researchers and editors.

(3) & (4) Treaty Right to Livelihood I & II: Conceptions, Intent and Context

The focus of this project is to identify what “livelihood” meant to First Nations and the Crown at the time of Treaty and how it has been interpreted and implemented over time. Phase I of this research project consisted of reviewing what existing studies’ have written on the spirit and intent of the ‘Treaty Right to Livelihood’ and determining what additional research needs to be done.

In the past year Dr. Carl Beal was contracted to conduct the Phase I research. His report, “The Manitoba Treaties and the ‘Right to Livelihood’” (90 pages plus appendices) provides an excellent overview of how existing studies have treated this subject—his research demonstrates that no comprehensive study of the spirit and intent and implementation of the livelihood provisions has been done for the Treaty regions in Manitoba. The report provides considerable insight into First Nations’ economic activities prior to, during and following the Treaty negotiations, and how First Nations’ economic activities at the time Treaty influenced their understanding of the kinds of support they expected from the Crown. Dr. Beal also provides a contemporary relative value analysis of Treaty annuities and gratuities and a preliminary review of Band Trust accounts in the early reserve period. Dr. Beal’s analyses of the gaps in the literature are now being used as a guide in the development of the Phase 2 and 3 research work plan for the coming years which will focus on archival and oral history sources.

The fourth approved project for the 2007-2008 fiscal year was the Treaty Right to Livelihood II project that was to focus on the oral history material on livelihood. It was

not undertaken this past year and is postponed to this year because it is dependent on the findings of the Oral History Project which will not be complete until this year.

(5) The Dakota Oyate Experience in Manitoba

This research project will review existing published and unpublished literature and reports pertaining to the historical and contemporary experience of the Dakota Oyate in present-day Western Canada. This project includes, but is not limited to studying:

- Dakota Oyate views and perspectives of their historical and contemporary relationship to the land and their Treaty First Nation neighbours;
 - The kinds of Treaty knowledge the Dakota Oyate have gleaned from their experiences in the USA and their Treaty First Nation neighbours;
 - Traditional Dakota Oyate Treaty and alliance making;
 - Spirit and Intent of Dakota-Crown relations;
 - Changing nature of Dakota Oyate-Crown relations over time;
 - an analysis of the various options available to the Dakota Oyate in regards to contemporary Treaty making and Treaty adhesions and their respective implications, and what role the TRCM can take in accommodating Dakota Oyate needs in these areas;
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(6) Treaty Provisions: Oral and Written Accounts

This research project will consist of a comprehensive review of existing primary and secondary sources and oral history accounts pertaining to the provisions discussed and recorded during the treaty making process in present-day Manitoba. The project will include a comparative analysis of diverging accounts between written documentary evidence and oral evidence and Treaty provision disparities.

(6) Traditional Approaches to Treaty Making

This project will consist of a comprehensive and interdisciplinary review of the literature addressing traditional (pre- and early- contact) Anishinaabeg, Anishininwak, Ininiwak, Dakota Oyate and Densuline knowledge and practises relative to Treaty relationships building. Phase 1 of this research project will include, but is not limited to, the study of:

- traditional diplomacy and treaty making protocols
- different kinds of treaty relationships (peace & friendship and territorial)
- intellectual labour First Nations provided the HBC and early settlers
- spirit and Intent of traditional Treaty making
- traditional political formation of First Nations
- traditional perspectives on concepts such as livelihood and governance
- the role of sacred, and significant place names in relation to traditional land tenure, and history
- linguistic analysis of traditional diplomacy, alliance building, trade and ceremonial language, including but not limited to, analyses of metaphor, symbolism, ceremony,

- and familial relationship terminology used in the Treaty making process
 - First Nation's representations of the Treaty relationship in non-print and unconventional sources
 - relative significance of "signing" and/or "touching the pen" during the Treaty signing process
 - identify gaps in the literature and make recommendations for additional research topics arising out of this review.
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Ancillary Project: A Visual History of the Treaties in Manitoba

This project includes the collection and analysis of a range of visual images (photographs, sketches, contemporary art) that capture historical and contemporary Treaty activities and the spirit of the Treaty relationship. It is being conducted in collaboration with the AMC under the Manitoba Treaties Oral History Research Project. The objective of this project is to develop the "A Visual History of the Treaties in Manitoba" gallery collection which will be displayed and housed at the TRCM office to support its research strategy and public education activities.

Ancillary Project: TRCM Commissioned Reports

In order to make the research findings of the TRCM accessible to the public the TRCM is intending to publish the research reports it commissions into a two volume series entitled *Treaty Relations Commissioner of Manitoba Papers*.