

High Conservation Value Forests

Northeastern Ontario



MERC

Tembec

Mushkegowuk Environmental Research Centre (MERC)

First Nation owned, independent agency

Attawapiskat FN, Kashechewan FN, Fort Albany
FN, Moose Cree FN, Taykwa Tagamou FN,
Chapleau Cree FN, Missanabie Cree FN

Will address environmental information needs,
with a focus on the traditional territory

Mushkegowuk Traditional Territory



Increased FN participation

- Missanabie Cree- forestry negotiations
- Chapleau Cree– value added mill
- Taykwa Tagamou– harvesting agreements
- Moose Cree– SFL and harvesting operations

Mushkegowuk Environmental Research Centre (MERC)

Communities lack access to information to evaluate impacts

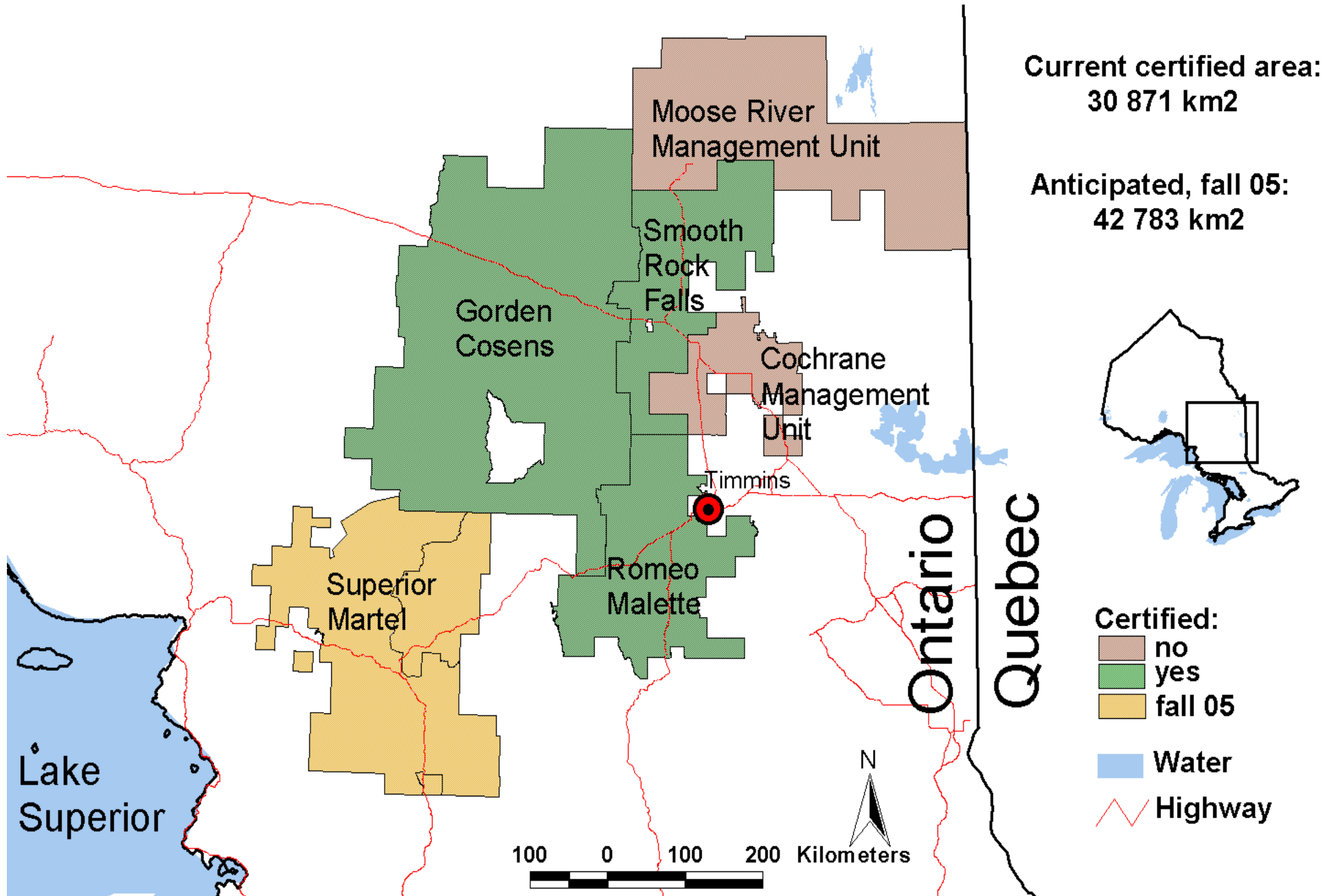
MERC will increase access to resources and over time build a reliable foundation of knowledge

- develop database to capture previous research that has been conducted within our traditional lands
- conduct new research tailored to community priorities

Tembec HCVF Efforts

- ✓ Currently have 3 forests FSC certified in Ontario
- ✓ Efforts require participation of government and local communities, including First Nations
- ✓ Recruited biologists to write HCVF reports

Tembec FSC Certified Forests



Tembec & MERC

HCVF reporting requires continual improvement
need exists to fill certain information gaps (e.g.
cultural, traditional ecological knowledge)

MERC – ideal organization to fill need

Tembec recognizes this opportunity to work
together → committed to using MERC as a
contractor for HCVF assessment, as well as future
natural resource assessment efforts in the future

Case Study: Smooth Rock Falls Forest

High Conservation Values:

- Woodland caribou (SAR, edge of range)
- Large landscape level forests (regionally significant)
- White pine/Red pine (outlier populations, ecosystems in decline)

Woodland caribou

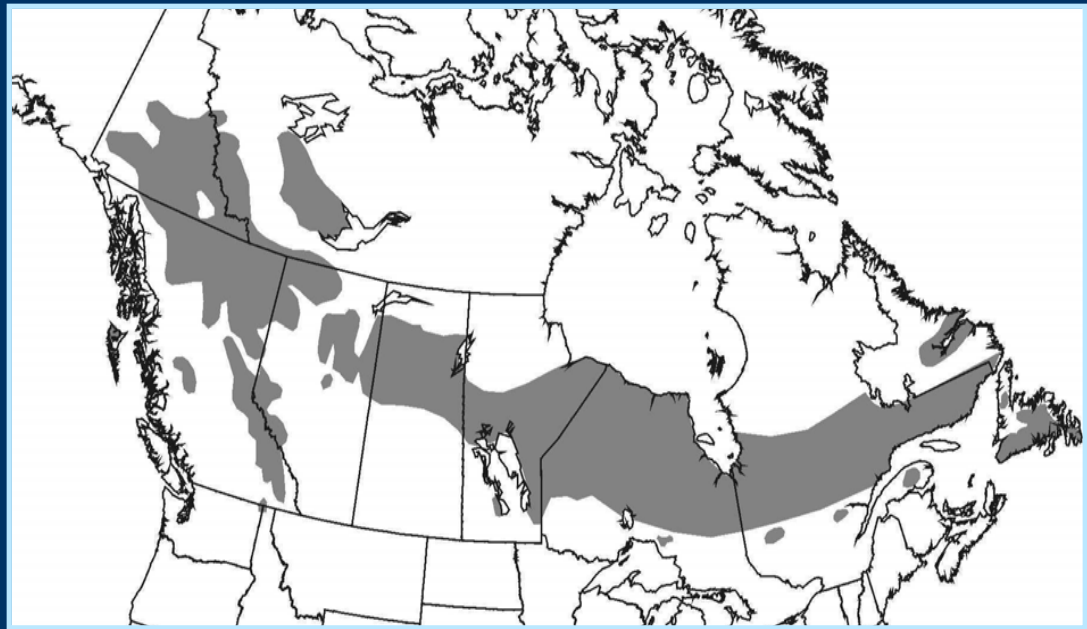
Reasons for HCV status:

-boreal woodland caribou are listed as
threatened by COSEWIC/COSSARO

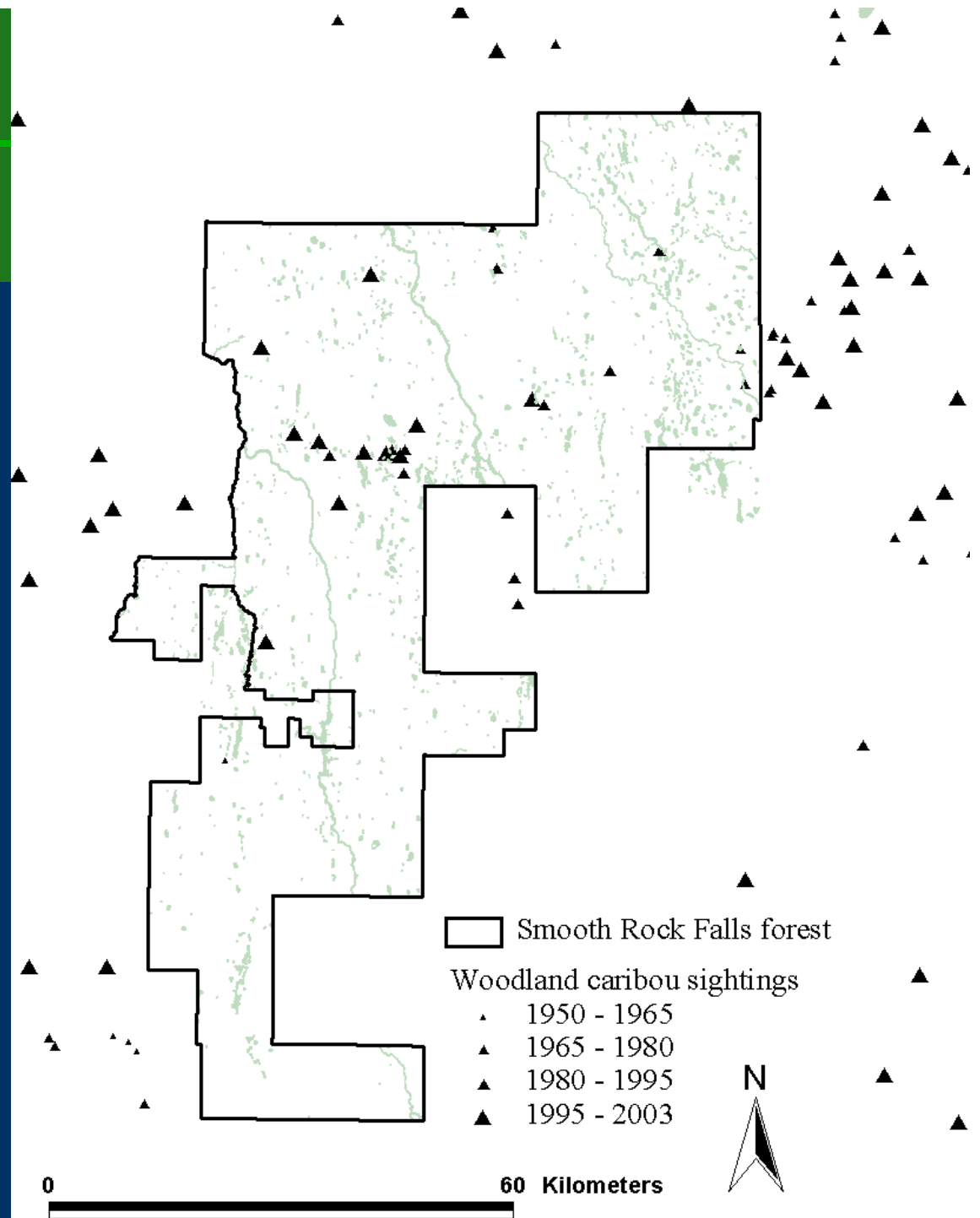


Woodland caribou

-known range
distribution
transects the
SRFF



-OMNR sightings data confirm the presence of caribou on the forest



Large landscape level forests

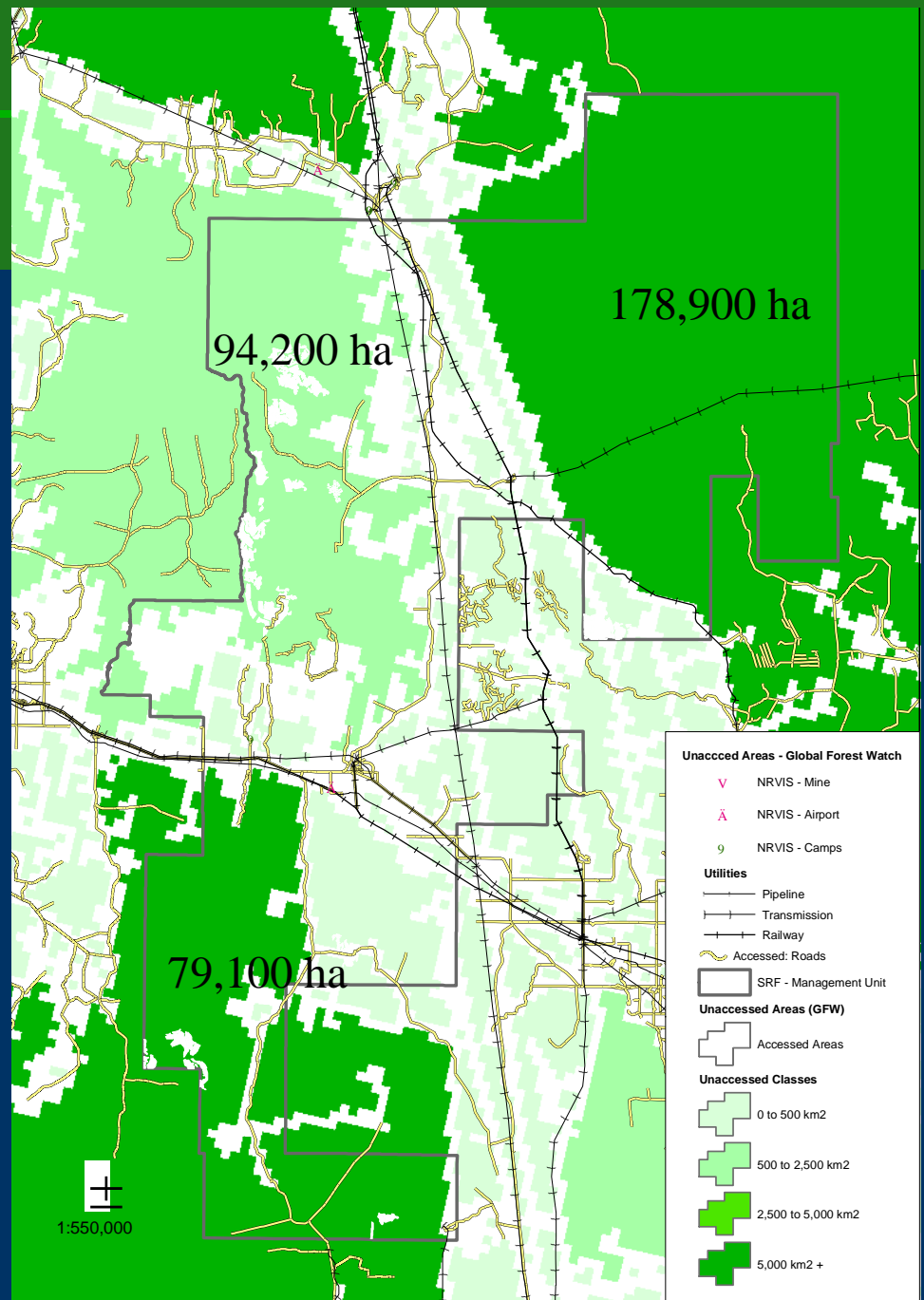
Reasons for HCV status:

- unfragmented forest

- 50, 000 – 200, 000 ha (regionally significant)

- >30 % in old growth

Global Forest Watch data: Intact forest

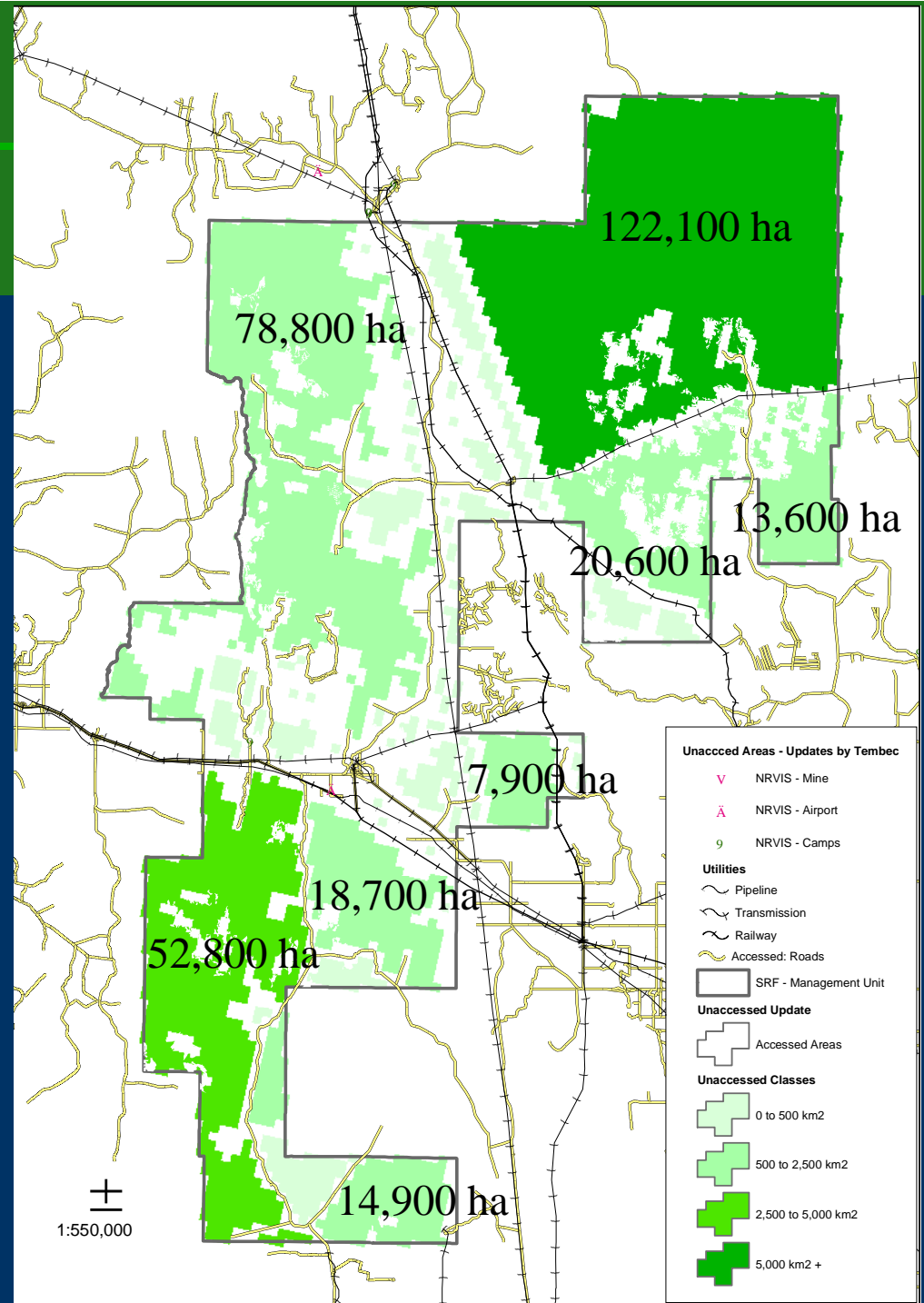


Global Forest Watch/Tembec data

Improved inventory

-roads

-burns (natural) vs cuts (anthropogenic)



White pine/Red Pine

White pine



Red pine



- edge of range and outlier populations
- Quick Cruising: ground-truthing of species composition and structure

Strategy:

- if appropriate, use existing guidelines to protect HCV's
- if current direction is lacking, or insufficient:
 - consult with local managers
 - collaborate with government /researchers/
 - employ best science

Strategy: White/Red Pine

Use existing forest management planning guideline direction

- Exclude from harvest
- Plant stock from collected seed
- Convert stands to $>$ PW/RP proportions
- Remove understory other than PW/RP
- Develop accurate inventory on unit, particularly for stands with $>40\%$ PW/RP

Opportunity

- Providing training opportunities is part of MERC's mission
- Will explore combining HCVF management practices with the Tembec First Nation Ranger program
 - Ground truthing of outlier species
 - Forestry equipment training (silvicultural techniques, GPS, etc.)

Strategy: caribou/intact forest

Current direction is lacking for protecting these values.

Woodland caribou:

- Collect sightings information
- Train staff in caribou identification
- Use best science for habitat mapping and deferral

Strategy:

MERC will work towards the inclusion of Traditional Knowledge and local First Nation recommendations

Current regional Caribou Task Team lacks aboriginal input

Strategy: caribou

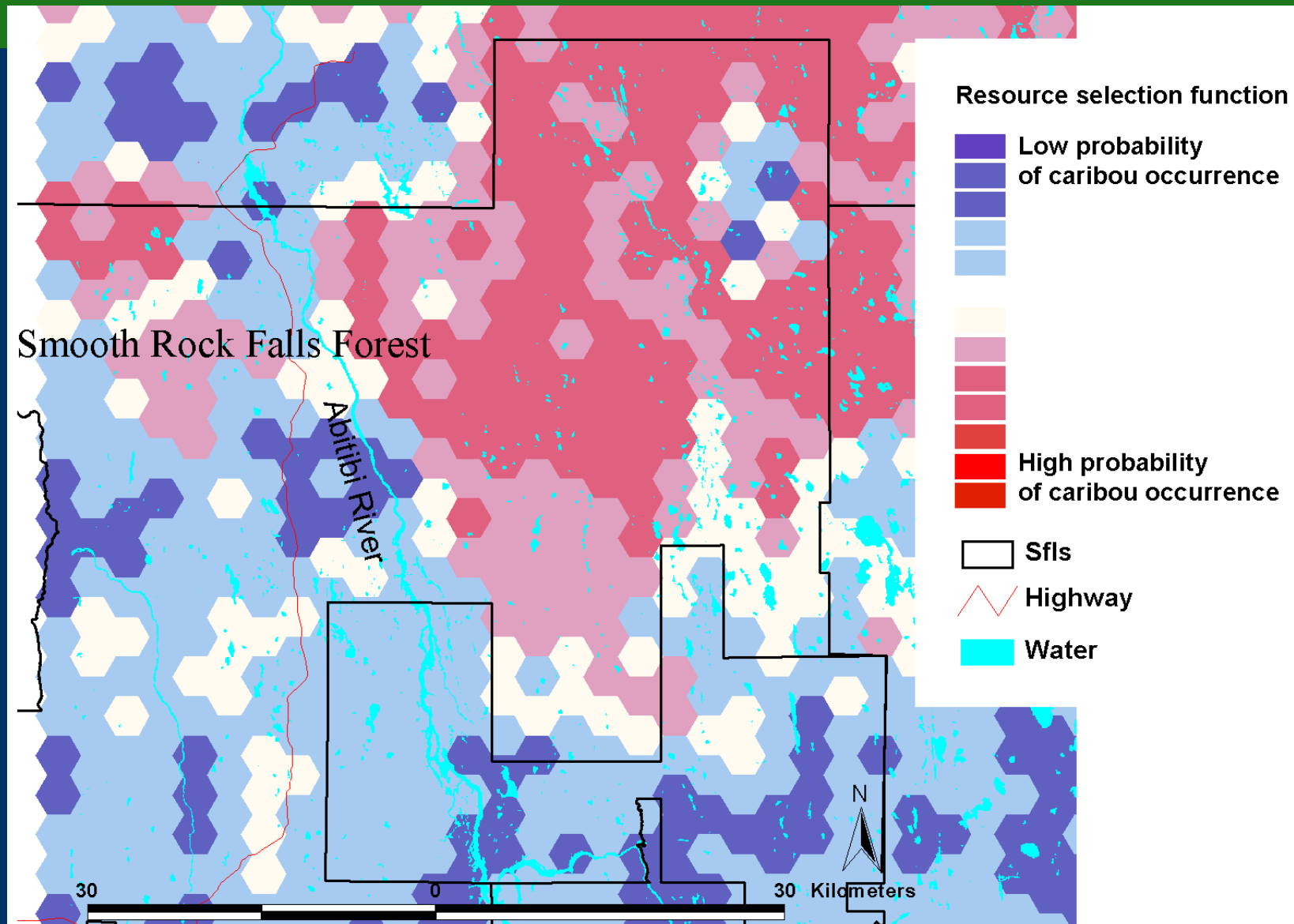
Graduate Research

Collaboration with Laurentian University and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

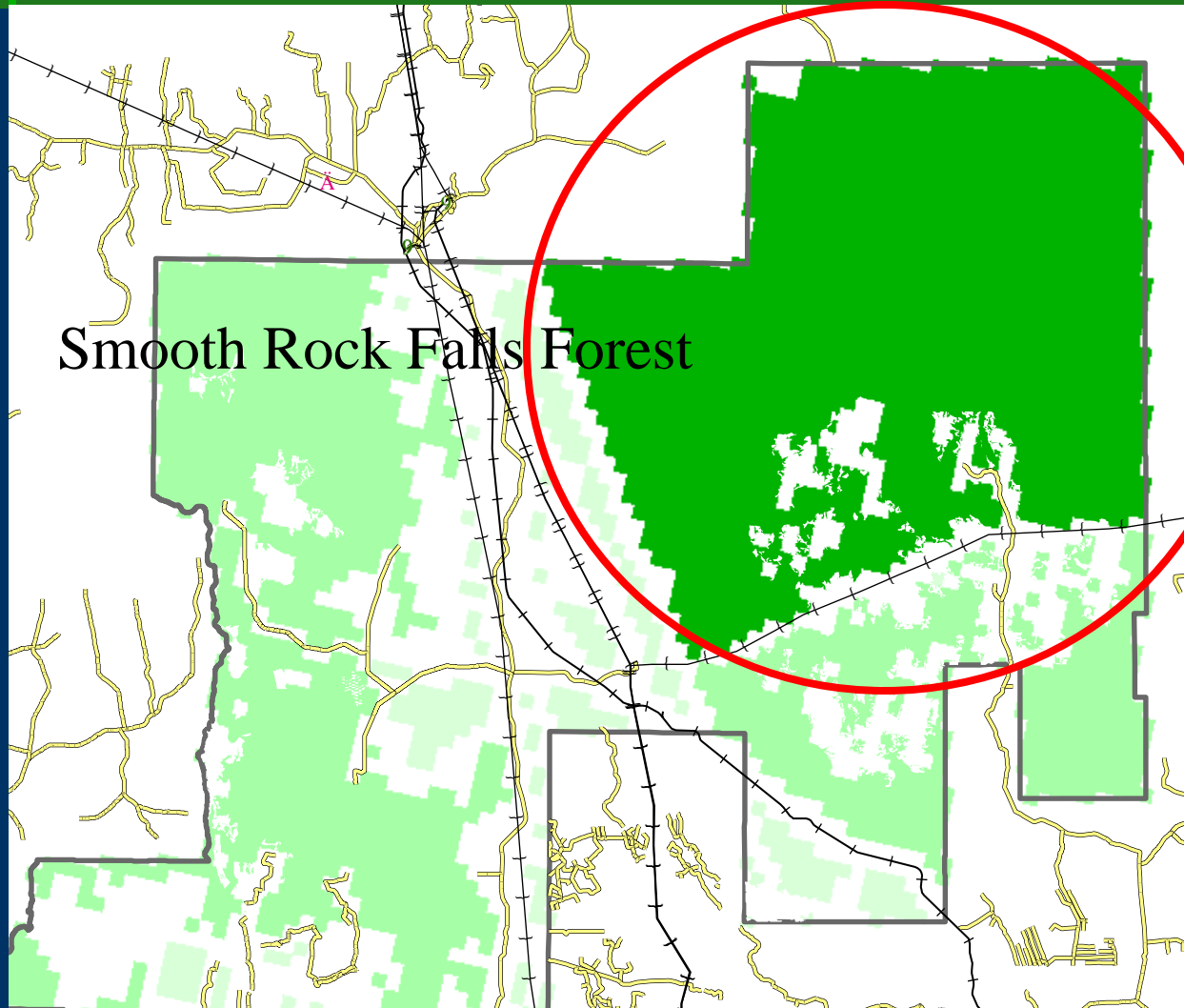
Woodland caribou habitat selection study

- Satellite telemetry data
- Landsat/FRI land cover inventories

Caribou habitat suitability: resource selection function mapping

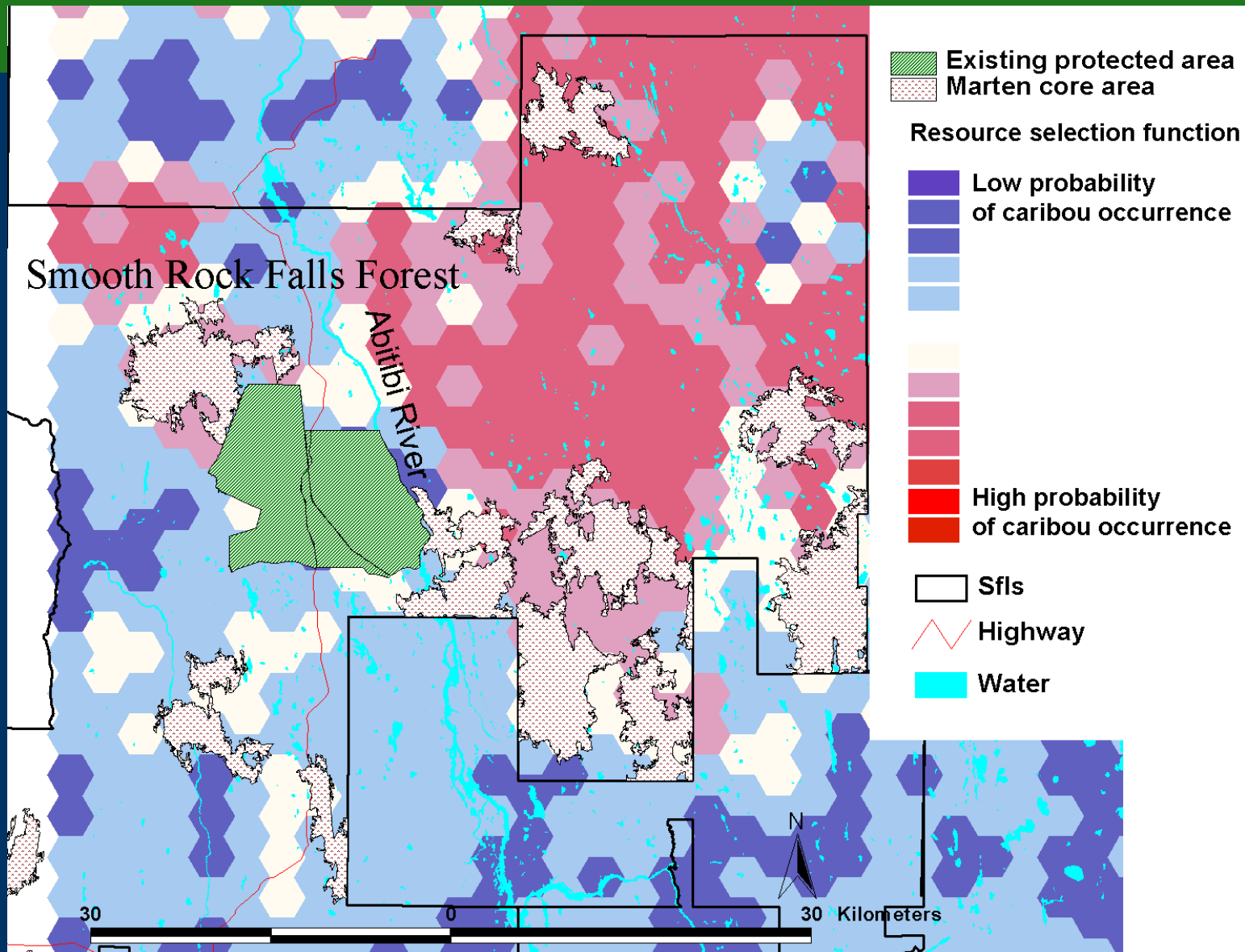


Overlapping values:

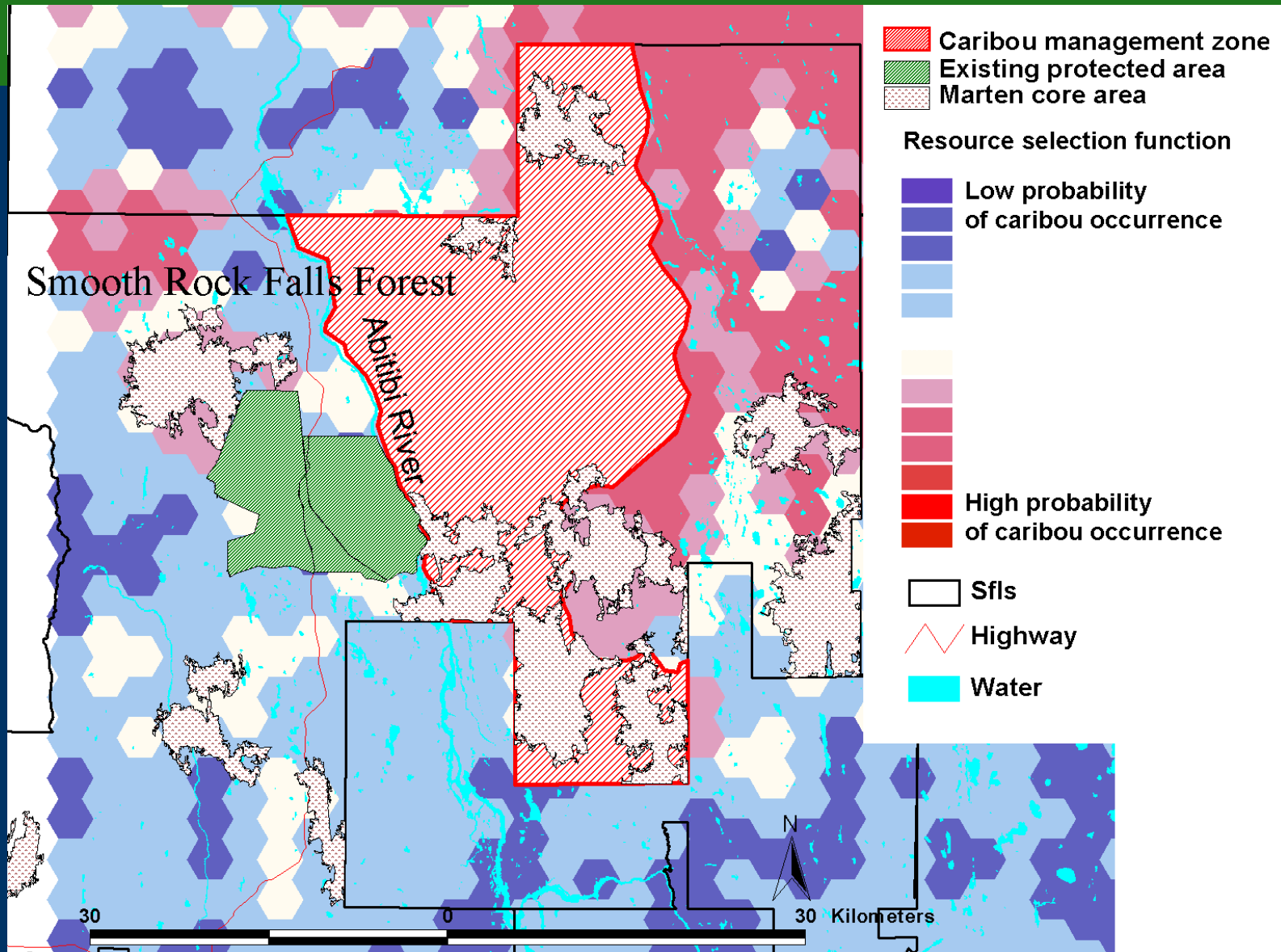


Large
landscape
level forest

Current protected areas



Caribou management zone



Caribou Management Zone

- minimize disturbance (harvest, road construction)
- road decommissioning
- browse reduction
- no management activity
- collaborate with adjacent forests to protect/manage caribou habitat

Deferral Process to protect caribou and intact forest values:

- land use planning decision
- requires consultation with stakeholders
- approval/participation of Ontario Ministry Resources
- collaboration between WWF-Canada and Tembec Inc.

Fulfilling the INTENT

Current criteria highlight the lack of adequate information on species and ecological processes needed to identify HCV's (e.g. critical habitat)

Not just a repackaging of info

Fulfilling the INTENT

HCVs associated with cultural identity requires a massive shift in current practices

Identification of values requires significant effort into building relationships with First Nation communities

Fulfilling the INTENT

Local aboriginal people need to see their input on the ground

-goose flight pattern concerns

MERC offers Tembec the opportunity to develop management and monitoring strategies that meet certification objectives

Next Steps

- MERC is still in a start-up phase and looking to build capacity as well as broaden our support base
- Work with Tembec on engaging First Nations with FSC P3/ P9 , identify opportunities
- Explore linking existing Mushkegowuk/ MERC projects with certification– MERC will not only benefit community access to info but also industry access to data that has community support (i.e.: TK studies)

