



Managing Land, Governing for the Future: Finding the Path Forward to Membertou



What is the research about?

The objective of this research was to examine current land management systems developed by economically successful First Nations in order to determine best practices that will be shared with the community of Membertou in the development of their own land management code.

What does the research do?

A literature review and analysis of the current *Indian Act* land management regime and its impact on economic development was conducted. The processes and land management laws that have been developed by other economically successful First Nations were also reviewed.

Discussions and interviews were conducted with First Nations experts in land management, experts at Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), provincial governments, and economic advisors. Discussions were also held with Membertou community members on which best practices to apply to Membertou.

Advisory Committee

The Membertou Governance Committee acted as the Advisory Committee for this research project. The Governance Committee is a group of 30 community volunteers who are in the process of systematically engaging the community to develop a lands management system for Membertou.

Why is the research important?

Membertou First Nation is committed to managing its own lands. Currently it is bound by the *Indian Act* and time consuming, restrictive policies and procedures which have created huge burdens on community economic development. This research project supported Membertou's ground breaking initiative to develop a new land management code for the community, which will in turn further enable economic development; for example, giving Membertou the authority to determine the types of businesses that can be placed on reserve land. Project outcomes apply to Membertou's unique cultural, geographic, and economic situation but may provide direction for other Aboriginal communities in the Atlantic region seeking to develop their own land management systems.

Research Team:

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