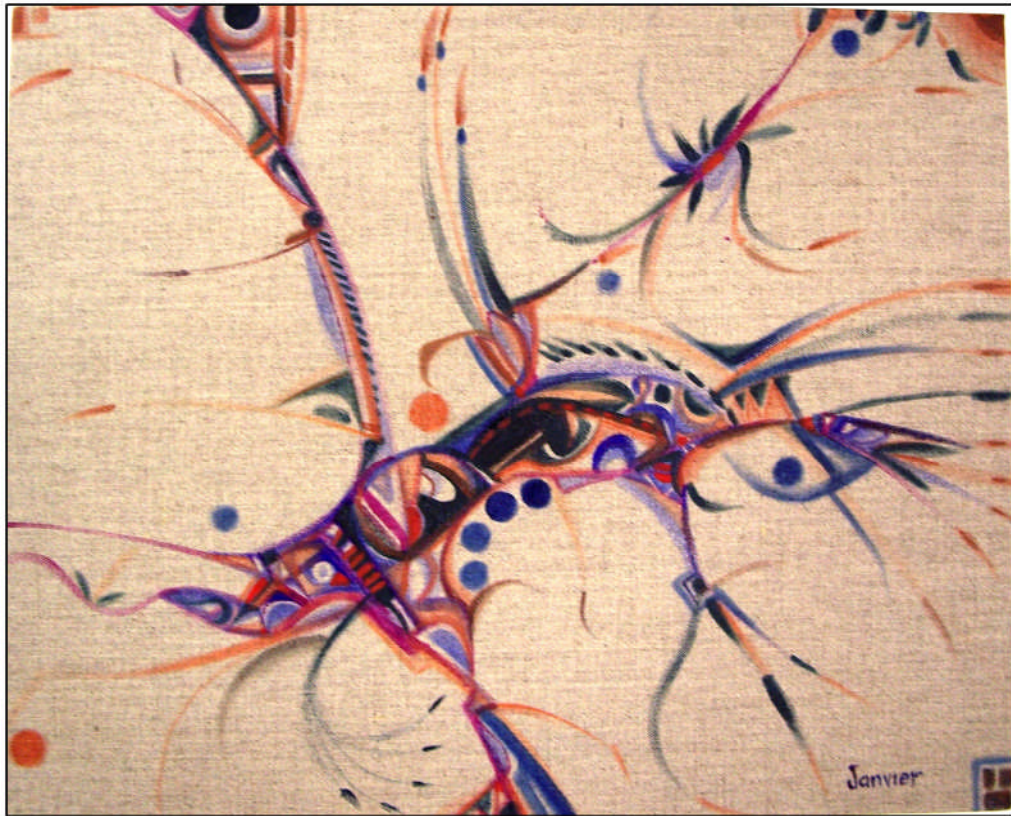


# **COLD LAKE FIRST *JIÉ HOUCHÁLÁ (BERRY POINT)***

## **TRADITIONAL LAND USE AND OCCUPANCY**



**Prepared for:**  
Cold Lake First  
P. O. Box 1769.  
Cold Lake, Alberta  
T9M 1P4

**Prepared by:**  
Origins Heritage Consultants Inc.  
269 Wildwood Drive S.W.  
Calgary, Alberta  
T3C 3E2

February 2012

## **Study Team**

### **Cold Lake First Nations**

Cold Lake First Nations Elders and Harvesters

### **Origins Heritage Consultants Inc.**

#### **Project Manager**

Annette McCullough

#### **Senior Researcher/Interviews**

Nicole Nicholls

#### **Research Assistant**

Findlay MacDermid

#### **GIS Mapping**

Findlay MacDermid

Melanie Meeking

Iain Smith

#### **Analysis and Reporting**

Annette McCullough

Nicole Nicholls

Cover Image:

Alex Janvier, *Blueberry Point*, acrylic on linen, 2011. Courtesy of Janvier Gallery.

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Cold Lake First Nations.....	1
1.2	English Bay Recreation Area .....	1
1.3	Intellectual Property .....	5
<b>2</b>	<b>STUDY SCOPE AND PARAMETERS.....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1	Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Studies.....	6
2.1.1	Definitions.....	7
2.2	Study Approach .....	8
2.3	Study Objectives .....	9
2.4	Spatial and Temporal Considerations.....	9
2.4.1	Spatial Considerations.....	9
2.4.2	Temporal Considerations.....	9
<b>3</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1	Study Scoping.....	11
3.1.1	Community Scoping Meetings .....	11
3.1.2	Guiding Group .....	12
3.2	Literature/Records Review .....	12
3.3	Interviews and Mapping .....	14
3.4	Field Visits.....	14
3.5	Analysis and Reporting .....	15
3.6	Study Results Review .....	16
3.7	Report Finalization .....	16
<b>4</b>	<b>CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>17</b>
4.1	<i>Denesuline</i> – The People .....	18
4.1.1	Relationship with <i>The Land</i> .....	18
4.1.2	Respect and Reciprocity.....	20
4.1.3	Livelihood and Adaptation .....	21
4.1.4	Sharing, Cooperation and Collective Effort .....	24
4.1.5	Stories and Oral History.....	25
4.1.6	Named/Storied Places.....	27
4.1.7	Intergenerational Transmission of History, Knowledge and Values.....	27
4.1.8	Governance.....	28
4.1.9	Gatherings.....	29
4.1.10	Clans, Families and Kinship.....	31
4.1.11	Future Generations.....	31
4.1.12	Prophecies .....	32
4.1.13	Language .....	32
4.1.14	Medicine/Health.....	33
4.2	<i>The Land</i> .....	34
	Denne Ni Nennè .....	34

4.2.1	Diversity and Abundance of Resources .....	34
4.2.2	Sacred Ecologies.....	35
4.2.3	Living With The Seasons .....	36
4.2.4	<i>Denesuline</i> Land and Resource Management .....	36
4.2.1	Sacred Landscapes/Features .....	39
4.2.2	Named Places .....	41
4.2.3	Trails and Travel Corridors .....	41
4.3	Selected Historical Notes .....	44
4.3.1	Treaty 6 .....	44
4.3.2	Cold Lake Air Weapons Range.....	44
4.3.3	Hydrocarbon Developments .....	46
4.3.4	Parks and Tourism .....	49
4.3.5	Cumulative Encroachments.....	50
<b>5</b>	<b>JÍÉ HOUCHÁLÁ/BERRY POINT TRADITIONAL USE AND OCCUPANCY.....</b>	<b>53</b>
5.1	Connection to Jié Houchálá/Berry Point .....	54
5.2	<i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> Spatial Extent .....	55
5.3	Jié Houchálá/Berry Point as a ‘ <i>Living on the Land Gathering Place</i> ’ .....	57
5.4	Occupancy Areas, Activities and Relationships .....	57
5.4.1	<i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> Seasonal Settlement/Camps.....	58
5.4.2	Trails .....	66
5.4.3	Burials .....	71
5.4.4	Named Places and Landmarks.....	74
5.4.5	Prayer/Ceremony/Healing and Peaceful Enjoyment of Place.....	77
5.4.6	Trading Posts .....	78
5.5	Harvesting Activities, Locales and Relationships.....	78
5.5.1	Fishing.....	80
5.5.2	Berry Picking .....	88
5.5.3	Hunting and Trapping .....	92
5.5.4	Gathering and Collection of Medicinal Plants and Other Resources for Healing and Spiritual Practice.....	97
5.5.5	Birch Bark and Sap Collection .....	101
5.5.6	Gathering of Other Resources .....	104
5.5.7	Water.....	105
5.6	The Unique Nature of <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	105
5.7	Summary .....	109
<b>6</b>	<b>IMPACTS TO OCCUPANCY AND USE OF JÍÉ HOUCHÁLÁ/BERRY POINT.....</b>	<b>112</b>
6.1	Encroachments Experienced To Date .....	113
6.1.1	Taking up of Lands for Private Settlement .....	113
6.1.2	English Bay Recreation Area .....	117
6.1.3	Physical Disturbance and Alteration of Land.....	118
6.1.4	Water Withdrawals and Contamination.....	121
6.1.5	Barriers to Access .....	122

6.1.6	Recreational Use .....	123
6.1.7	Cumulative Encroachments .....	124
6.2	Experienced Impacts to Traditional Occupancy and Use.....	127
6.2.1	Impacts to Harvesting .....	127
6.2.2	Impacts to Occupancy .....	131
6.2.3	Impacts to Water .....	133
6.2.4	Cumulative Impacts .....	133
6.3	Key Concerns Expressed About the Campground Construction and Expansion .....	134
6.4	Summary of Specific Anticipated Impacts of Campground Construction .....	136
6.5	The Significance of Impacts to Traditional Occupancy and Use of <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	138
<b>7</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>140</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>FINAL STATEMENT</b> .....	<b>142</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>REFERENCES CITED</b> .....	<b>143</b>
9.1	Internet.....	145

## List of Figures

Figure 1.1	Project Location .....	2
Figure 1.2	Cold Lake First Nations' Reserve Lands.....	3
Figure 1.3	English Bay Provincial Recreation Area and <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	4
Figure 4.1	Dené Language Areas .....	19
Figure 4.2	Gathering Places.....	30
Figure 4.3	Information Digitized from Cold Lake First Nations' Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Wall Map .....	37
Figure 4.4	Cold Lake First Nations Denesuline Broad Land Use Zones .....	38
Figure 4.5	Previously Recorded Sacred Landscapes / Features.....	40
Figure 4.6	Cold Lake Air Weapons Range in Relation to <i>Denne Ni Nennè</i> .....	47
Figure 4.7	Oil Sands Leases in Relation to <i>Denne Ni Nennè</i> (Note: Oil Sands Lease Data Not Accessed for Saskatchewan).....	48
Figure 4.8	Provincial Parks around <i>Łouwe Chok 'Touwe</i> (Cold Lake) .....	51
Figure 4.10	Cumulative Encroachments .....	52
Figure 5.1	<i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> Spatial Extent.....	56
Figure 5.2	<i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> Seasonal Settlement Area and Camps.....	59
Figure 5.3	1949 Air Photo Showing Primrose Trail (Red Arrows Used to Point to Trail).....	68
Figure 5.4	Primrose Trail through <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	69
Figure 5.5	Burials Mapped at, and in the Vicinity of, <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	72
Figure 5.6	Named Places and Landmarks At and Near <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	75
Figure 5.8	Whitefish Spawning around Cold Lake (note relationship to Cold Lake First Nations traditional settlements) .....	85
Figure 5.9	Seasonal Cold Lake Fishing Closure (Map Courtesy of ASRD) .....	87
Figure 5.10	Berry-picking Locations Mapped in, and contiguous to, <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	90
Figure 5.11	Hunting and Trapping Locations Mapped in <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	95
Figure 5.12	Medicinal plant collection locations Mapped in <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> and Immediate Area .....	98
Figure 5.14	Birch Bark and Sap, White Moss and Spruce Root Collection Locations Mapped in <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	102
Figure 5.15	Springs Mapped at <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....	106

<b>Figure 5.16</b>	<b>All Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Locales Mapped in <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .....</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Figure 6.1</b>	<b>Encroachments as of 1951.....</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Figure 6.2</b>	<b>Encroachments as of 1980.....</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Figure 6.3</b>	<b>Encroachments as of 2002.....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Figure 6.4</b>	<b>Current Encroachments .....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Figure 6.5</b>	<b>Cumulative Encroachments.....</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>Figure 6.6</b>	<b>Cumulative Encroachments Cold Lake Shore.....</b>	<b>126</b>

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Berry Point or *Jié Houchálá*, as it is known in the *Denesuline* language, is situated within Cold Lake First Nations' traditional territory, *Denne Ni Nennè*, and encompasses the area now known as the English Bay Provincial Recreation Area. Proposed plans for construction of the English Bay Provincial Recreation Area prompted the Nation to initiate legal proceedings in opposition to the proposed redevelopment.

According to Cold Lake First Nations, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is an area of long-standing and continuous occupancy and use that is central to the Nation's history, heritage and continuing ability to sustain *Denesuline* culture and identity and the meaningful exercise of constitutionally protected rights.

Origins Heritage Consultants Inc. was contracted by Cold Lake First Nations to carry out a traditional occupancy and use study of *Jié Houchálá /Berry Point*, documenting the past and current occupancy and use of the lands within and in proximity to the lands in question. The study was designed in collaboration with Cold Lake First Nations' Elders and harvesters who are personally familiar with *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

## 1.1 Cold Lake First Nations

Cold Lake First Nations is located in northeastern Alberta (Figure 1.1). The Nation's traditional territory, *Denne Ni Nennè*, is largely centred around *Ah 'Touwe* (Primrose Lake) and encompasses lands and waters within the present provincial borders of both Alberta and Saskatchewan, including Cold Lake (Figure 1.1).

The main settlement within Cold Lake First Nations' Le Goff Reserve 149, is connected to the urban centers of Cold Lake and Bonnyville by all-weather Secondary Highway 55. The current membership, according to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (2012), is 2,534 members, with 1,248 individuals living on reserve and 1,286 living off reserve.

Le Goff Reserve 149, located 26 km east of the Town of Bonnyville and 13 km south of Cold Lake, encompasses an area of 14528.10 hectares. There are three other reserves: 149A Cold Lake Town, 149B English Bay and 149C Martineau River, respectively (Figure 1.2). More detailed information about the Nation's reserves is presented in Section 4.3.2.

Cold Lake First Nations is a signatory to Treaty 6.

## 1.2 English Bay Recreation Area

English Bay Provincial Recreation Area is a campground operated by the province of Alberta. It is located on the west shore of Cold Lake, directly north of Cold Lake First Nations' English Bay Reserve 149B (Figure 1.3). It is situated entirely within *Denne Ni Nennè* and is encompassed within the area known as *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

The campground within English Bay Provincial Recreational Area was first created in 1959. It included campground, day use, and boat launch facilities. Alberta Sustainable Resources Development (ASRD) administered lands adjacent to English Bay Provincial Recreational Area (Figure 1.3). In 2005, Alberta Tourism Parks and Recreation (ATPR) made a decision to transfer these Crown lands from ASRD to ATPR. In 2008, the lands were transferred and are now administered by Northeast Management Area and formally included within English Bay Recreation Area.



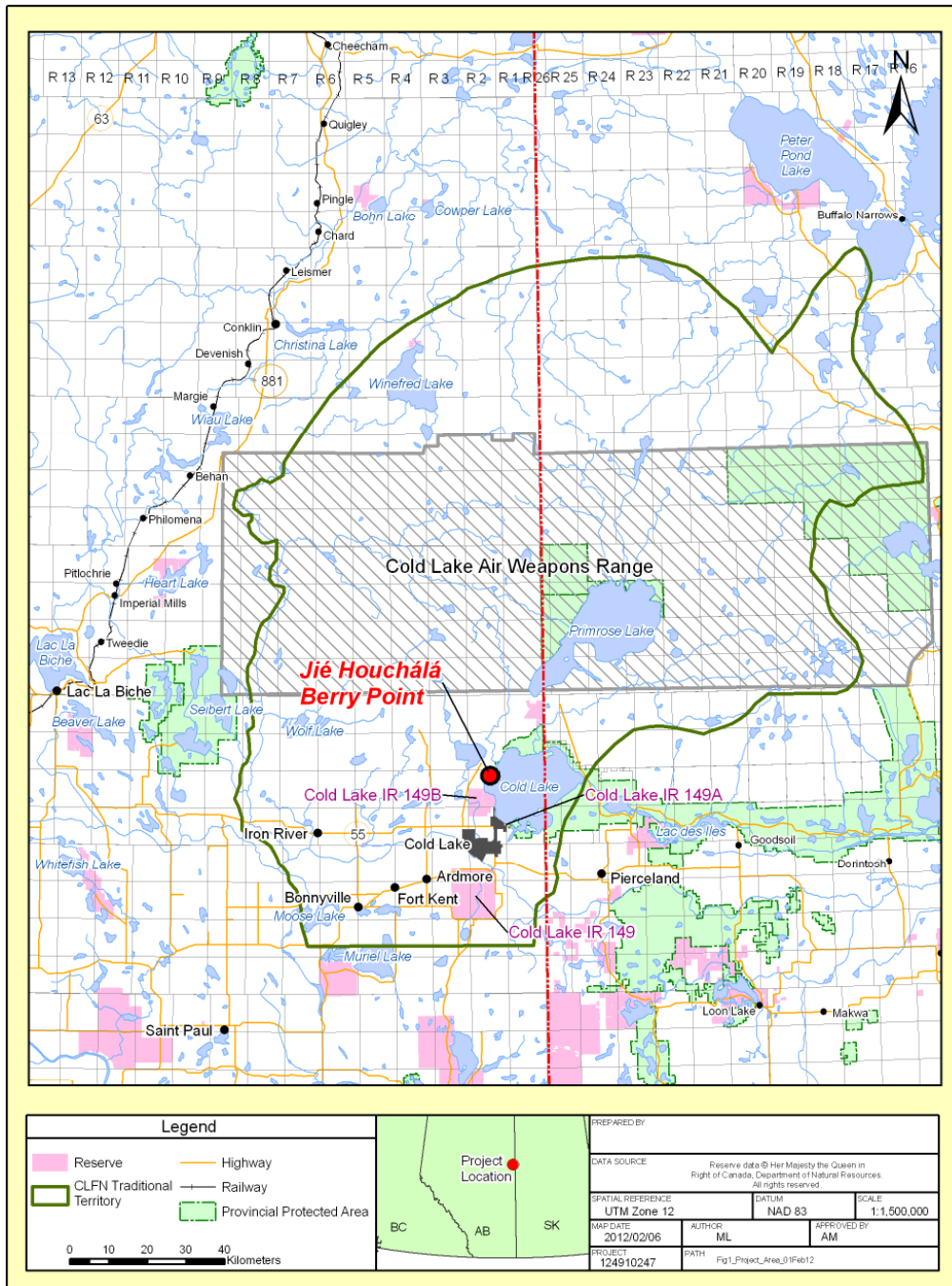
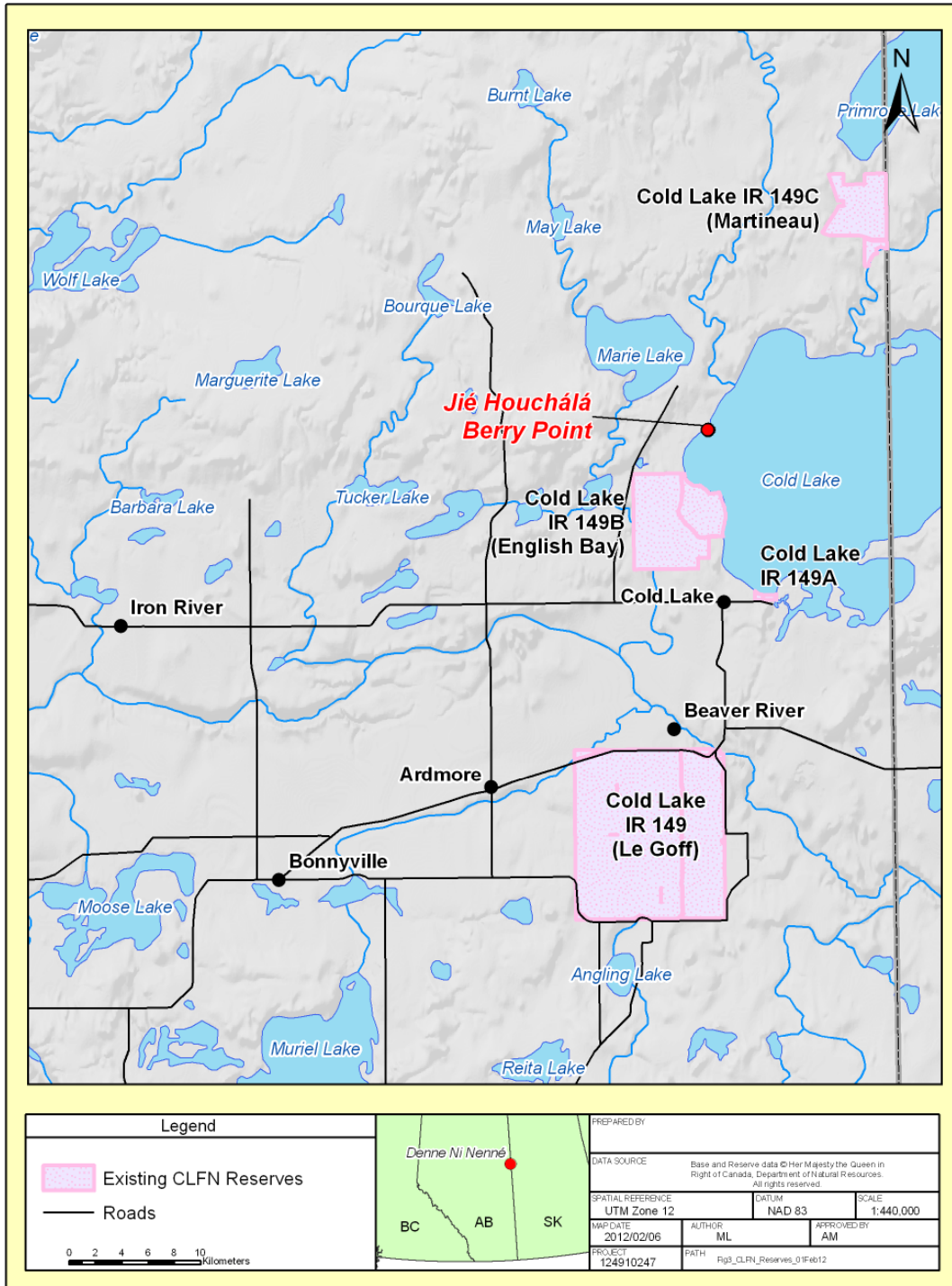
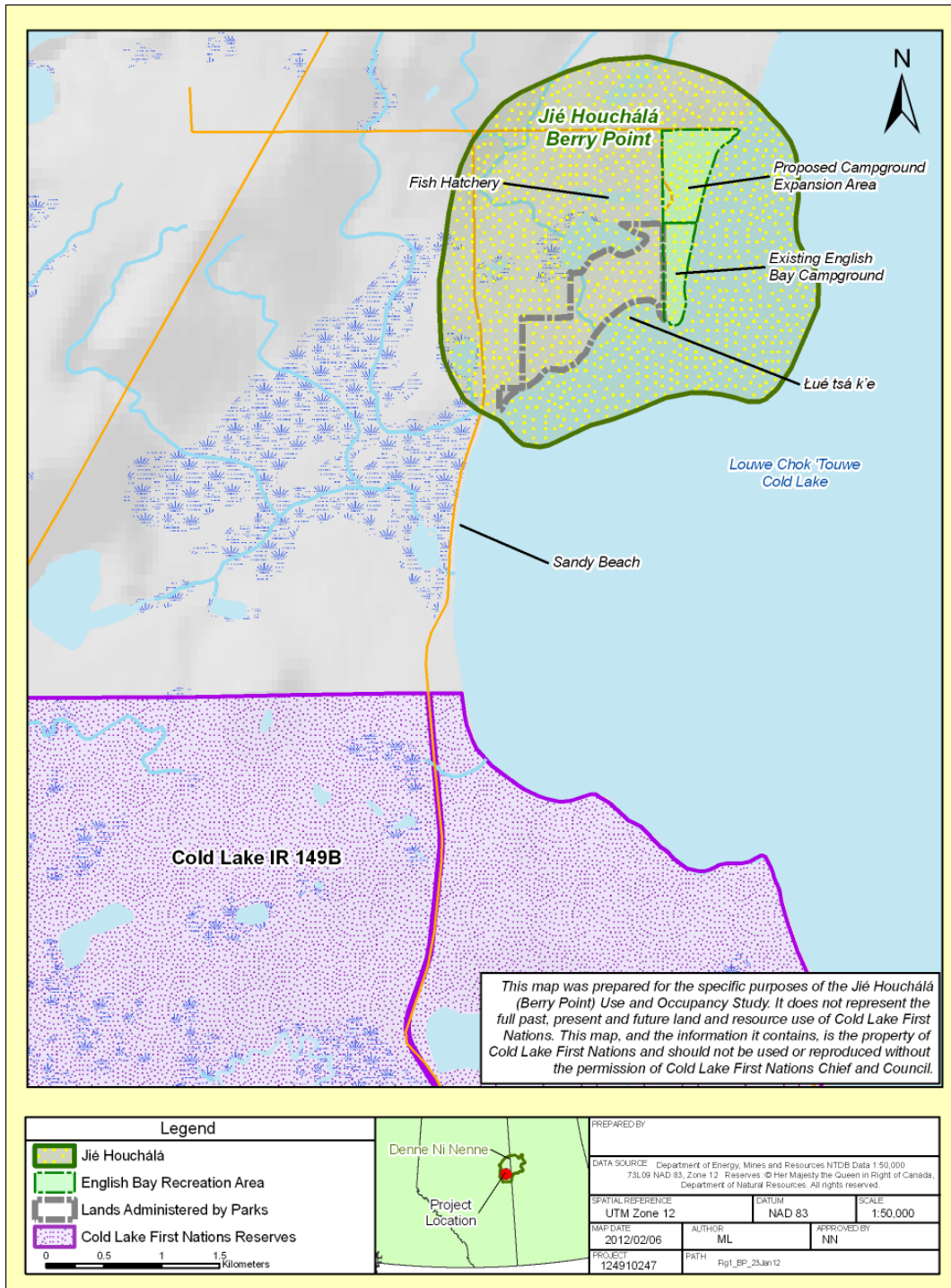


Figure 1.1 Project Location



**Figure 1.2 Cold Lake First Nations' Reserve Lands**



**Figure 1.3 English Bay Provincial Recreation Area and Jié Houchálá/Berry Point**

Construction plans include upgrades to the existing campground with expanded capacity on adjacent lands in Section 34 to the north.

Detailed plans for campground improvements and expansion were not available at the time the traditional occupancy investigations were launched. Generally, however, Cold Lake First Nations has been advised that the campground construction plans include widening and lengthening camp sites to accommodate RV units as well as redesign of the boat launch and creation of an associated parking lot. Based on information provided to Cold Lake First Nations, the expansion plans include 185 new campsites (17 pull through, 47 with power), a waste transfer station, a new boat launch on the north end of the park, parking for boat trailers, a day use facility, a playground and new walking trails at the south end.

In the absence of information stating otherwise, it is assumed that the proposed redevelopment is intended to permanently take up the Cold Lake First Nations traditional lands so identified.

### **1.3 Intellectual Property**

The information shared by Cold Lake First Nations members in this report is the intellectual property of the study participants and the Nation. Use of the information in whole or in part requires the written consent of Cold Lake First Nations' Chief and Council.

## 2 STUDY SCOPE AND PARAMETERS

### 2.1 Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Studies

Traditional Land Use and Occupancy studies are investigations which explicate the systematic nature of Aboriginal land use. The harvesting of fish, wildlife, and plant materials has been the historical basis of Aboriginal peoples' lives and the foundation of diverse cultures. For many, harvesting continues to be of central importance. In the pursuit of resources from the land, evidence is left on the physical landscape and in the minds of the individuals engaged in activities on *the land*. Mapping of these data is the essential feature of traditional use and occupancy studies and can be viewed as "the geography of oral tradition, or as the mapping of cultural and resource geography" wherein interview data about traditional use of resources and occupancy of lands is gathered and presented in map form (Tobias 2000).

In Canada, traditional land use and occupancy studies largely emerged in the 1970s in the socio-political context of comprehensive land claims (e.g. James Bay Cree, Inuit). The roots, however, are much earlier beginning in the late 1800s, with Franz Boas who recognized the importance of locally used place names in articulating the link between Aboriginal peoples and their occupation and use of the land (Wyatt et al 2010). In the 1950s and 1960s anthropologists and geographers, undertaking studies of human behaviour and institutions, began concentrating efforts on the relationships between humans and their environment (cultural ecology). Methods were developed to locate human behaviour in a natural environment and as part of a natural process (Elias 2004).

As traditional land use and occupancy research has evolved, various approaches have been used to document systems of Aboriginal tenure and demonstrate that traditional lands do not represent an occupied wilderness. In 1976 Weinstein combined land use data and subsistence harvesting research in an attempt to determine the spatial distribution of Fort George Cree harvesting activities (Weinstein 1976). In the same year, Freeman (1976) pioneered a model in his investigations for Inuit comprehensive land claims. This model is the basis for most of the recent land use studies carried out in North America (Wyatt et al 2010; Natcher 2000). The method developed by Freeman (1976) utilizes a map biography wherein respondents locate and map harvesting or other related land use activities. The map biographies are then aggregated by map categories and illustrate the spatial intensity of community land use.

A comprehensive land use and occupancy study would include broad range of sub-studies. As noted by Elias (2004:5) it could "include a natural history, an oral and written history, a gazetteer of place names, an ethnography of use practices, a harvest study, a social history of land and resource economics, a study of traditional land and resource management practices, and plenty of maps – map biographies, traditional knowledge maps, maps of place names, an archaeological and heritage site maps. Altogether, a single study might compile several gigabytes of data and information". Because the time and financial resources required for a comprehensive traditional land use and occupancy study are enormous, few are completed in their entirety.

Currently, the two primary purposes of land use research are to define geographical areas accurately as a basis for Aboriginal land claims (e.g. British Columbia) and to visually articulate conflicts that exist or may exist between Aboriginal land use patterns and development projects (e.g. mining, forestry, parks, subdivisions). Since the Berger Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry in 1977 a variant of Freeman's (1976) approach has been commonly employed for the purposes of Aboriginal consultation in relation to proposed developments/resource extraction projects. It involves the mapping of local land use patterns with proposed or existing industrial activity in order to demonstrate the effects on subsistence and other activities and assess the spatial aspects of conflict on traditional lands Natcher (2000).

Traditional land use and occupancy investigations carried out in relation to proposed development projects, provide information about the possible effects on Aboriginal peoples' traditional lands, ways of life, and rights, and, in so doing, provide the opportunity to improve planning and land use decision making processes such that Aboriginal peoples' rights, values, needs, and aspirations are considered.

Traditional occupancy and land use mapping is largely about documenting those aspects of occupancy and use which are tangible and lend themselves to spatial representation. This would include such things as trails/travel routes; places where animals and plant materials are harvested; habitation sites (e.g. settlements, cabins, camps, burials); spiritual or sacred sites/places/locales; named places and associated stories; habitats and sites/areas important to the survival of important animal populations (e.g. fish spawning beds, moose and caribou calving grounds, waterfowl breeding and staging areas).

It is increasingly being recognized that mapping points, lines and polygons (areas) does not articulate the cultural significance of the land for the people who belong to that land. Many sites of cultural significance for example, can be featureless. As a result efforts are being made in studies to document the cultural context and the symbolic significance of both tangible and intangible aspects of traditional use and occupancy and weave together practices, traditions, customs, and belief. Traditional ecological knowledge<sup>1</sup> about *the land* which has accrued over many generations of occupancy is also considered.

## **2.1.1 Definitions**

### **2.1.1.1 Traditional**

In the context of traditional land use and occupancy studies, the word 'traditional' refers to the constantly evolving transmission of customs and beliefs from generation to generation. It is not to be confused with 'traditionalism' which is the upholding or maintenance of traditions, especially so as to resist change. Traditional, in reference to traditional use and occupancy research, does not only refer to the past. Nor does it imply that cultures are static. Adaptive change is inherent in every tradition and new technology is adopted and used within an Aboriginal community's own systems of knowledge and ethics (see Tobias 2009; Wyatt et al 2010). The adoption of new technologies does not invalidate the cultural importance or meaningfulness of the activity itself (see Manuel and Posluns 1974; Johnson 2007).

### **2.1.1.2 Land**

The concept of 'the land' for Aboriginal peoples extends well beyond the physical landscape, encompassing the sky, the air, celestial bodies, the waters, the elements, and all living and non-living things to be found within it. For this reason, Aboriginal peoples' relationships with *the land* are fundamentally spiritual (Ross 2005).

### **2.1.1.3 Use**

'Use' refers to activities involving the harvesting of traditional resources and includes such things like hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering of medicinal plants and berry picking, and travelling to engage in these activities. It also includes a wide range of other activities and practices which for any given community or nation occurs over a specific geographic area (Tobias 2000).

---

<sup>1</sup> Traditional ecological knowledge "refers specifically to all types of knowledge about the environment derived from the experience and traditions of a particular group of people" (Usher 2000).

#### 2.1.1.4 Occupancy

'Occupancy' refers to an area a particular group regards as its own by virtue of continuing use, habitation, naming, knowledge, and control. Occupancy is evidenced by fixed cultural sites such as habitations, sacred areas, burial grounds, place names, place-based legends and stories, and so on" (Tobias 2000). Occupancy, even more so than use, indicates a "longstanding relationship to the land" because "the knowledge associated with occupancy is deeper and represents a more intimate connection to territory" than does use. (Tobias 2000).

## 2.2 Study Approach

The consultant study team involved in this investigation served as facilitators and rapporteurs, soliciting and recording information; clarifying issues and concerns being expressed by Cold Lake First Nations study participants in relation to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and the proposed redevelopment of English Bay Recreation Area; and articulating the issues and concerns, as they are understood, in a report for legal and regulatory authorities ultimately responsible for the final decisions which will be made.

Working collaboratively with Cold Lake First Nations members, a process was agreed upon for gathering information relating to the potential and anticipated effects of the proposed redevelopment project on *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* traditional lands and use and presenting it in ways which might result in the meaningful consideration of the Nation's cultural heritage, history, values and aspirations in decision making process.

The approach adopted for this study recognizes that potential effects of a proposed development project on traditional lands and use is ultimately of cultural, environmental, social, and economic relevance, because it pertains to the well-being of affected Aboriginal community (individually and collectively) as well as *the land* to which the Nation *belongs*. In addition to gathering and presenting information that is tangible and easily mapped (e.g., structures, occupancy and harvesting locales) efforts have been made to document the complexity of reciprocal relationships between *the people* (past, present and future) and *the land* and the well-being of both. Information pertinent to that relationship (e.g., the relationships among activities, the environmental and social conditions that support the meaningful practice of an activity, sociocultural institutions that depend upon, and/or support, harvesting activities and cultural relationships to the land, etc.) has been documented in the study participants' own voices, to the extent possible.

Also recognized in the approach is the complexity of the interface between different cultural worldviews and the longstanding and unresolved grievances between Aboriginal peoples, various levels of government and Canadian society as a whole. "It is impossible to make sense of the issues that trouble the relationship without a clear understanding of the past. This is true whether we speak of the nature of Aboriginal self-government in the Canadian federation, the renewal of treaty relationships, the challenge of revitalizing aboriginal cultural identities, or the sharing of lands and resources" (Government of Canada 1996a).

A preliminary draft report was prepared for review by the Cold Lake First Nations study participants to ensure the accuracy of the information presented in the text and maps. The suitability of the report contents for inclusion in a public document was also considered. The draft report was then submitted to Chief and Council for review. No revisions were required and final copies of the report were filed with the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench.

The intellectual property rights of Cold Lake First Nations and all study participants are recognized. All recorded information, including notes, GPS readings, GIS files, mark-up maps, and photographs, will be returned to the Nation's Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Project office upon conclusion of the legal/regulatory processes related to the proposed redevelopment of English Bay Recreation Area.

## 2.3 Study Objectives

The following objectives were defined as a result of scoping meetings carried out with Cold Lake First Nations prior to the commencement of traditional land use and occupancy investigations.

- To document Cold Lake First Nations' past and current use and occupancy of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*;
- To document Cold Lake First Nations members' views about the redevelopment plans for English Bay Provincial Recreation Area;
- To record and present the past and future anticipated adverse effects related to Cold Lake First Nations' occupancy and use *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, with specific reference to English Bay Provincial Recreation Area and proposed redevelopment plans, as identified by Cold Lake First Nations members;
- To consider the foregoing in the context of cumulative impacts and encroachments on Cold Lake First Nations and *Denne Ni Nennè*, the Nation's traditional territory, with specific reference to the *Louwe Chok 'Tue (Cold Lake)* and surrounding lands; and
- To gather and record the information shared by Cold Lake First Nations study participants in ways which augment and support the Nation's on going Traditional Land Use and Occupancy investigations.

## 2.4 Spatial and Temporal Considerations

The conceptual frameworks of time and space that have been considered relative to Cold Lake First Nations for this investigation follow below. They do not necessarily reflect Cold Lake First Nations members' concepts of space and time but rather are intended to assist legal and regulatory authorities in understanding Cold Lake First Nations' use and relationships with the traditional lands under investigation and the anticipated impacts of the proposed English Bay Recreation Area on these uses and relationships

### 2.4.1 Spatial Considerations

For the purposes of this investigation two study areas were identified in conjunction with Cold Lake First Nations study participants. The primary area of study is *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and the lands immediately surrounding it (Figure 3). Included within the boundaries of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* are the existing English Bay Recreation Area, the adjacent lands proposed for redevelopment and lands which were recently transferred from Alberta Sustainable Resourced Development to Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation (Figure 3).

Where confinement of the investigations and analysis of occupancy, use, and potential impacts to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* obscured rather than clarified the nature of matters being discussed by study participants, a larger secondary study area which included *Suckerville* on *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)* and the entirety of *Louwe Chok 'Tue (Cold Lake)* was considered.

### 2.4.2 Temporal Considerations

The study considers Cold Lake First Nations' past, current and future use of traditional lands and resources. Past use in the context of this investigation includes both ancestral past and recent past. Current use, for Cold Lake First Nations, includes the continuation of activities in accordance with long (ancient) established teachings and the opportunity for members of the Nation to retain and/or re-connect with *Denesuline* traditions and customs in contemporary contexts. Future use pertains to the ability of present generations and generations yet unborn to live tradition-oriented lives and retain *Denesuline* cultural and spiritual values.



One of the key temporal boundaries against which incremental changes in time are compared to by Cold Lake First Nations study participants is 1952, when the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (CLAWR) was created and the Nation was evicted from its traditional lands centered around *Ah 'Touwe (Primrose Lake)* (see Section 4.3.2). (The social upheaval that followed was documented by the Indian Claims Commission Primrose Lake Inquiry, see Appendix 1)

Despite the severance from *Ah 'Touwe (Primrose Lake)* ancestral lands and harvesting areas and resulting social upheaval, in combination with subsequent encroachments within *Denne Ni Nennè* (Section 4.3.5), *Denesuline* cultural values, patterns, and seasonal cycles of use for many of the Nation's families have persisted. Within the Nation today there is a growing movement to retain, reclaim and revitalize *Denesuline* customs, practices and traditions, including the *Denesuline* language.

## **3 METHODOLOGY**

There are eight components to the traditional land use and occupancy investigations carried out for *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. They include: (1) study scoping; (2) study group guidance sessions; (3) literature and records review; (4) individual and group interviews and mapping sessions; (5) field visits; (6) analyses and reporting; (7) community review of study results and (7) final report submission. These components are described in more detail in the following sections.

### **3.1 Study Scoping**

Two scoping meetings were held to introduce the proposed investigations to the Cold Lake First Nations community and seek guidance on the study approach and methods: the first on October 24, 2011 the second on October 31, 2011. These were followed by two meetings with a smaller “guiding group” of Cold Lake First Nations members, designated by the community at large through consensus at the October 31, 2011 scoping meeting, to provide further input.

#### **3.1.1 Community Scoping Meetings**

##### ***Community Scoping Meeting #1***

The initial meeting was held on October 24, 2011 at the English Bay Centre. Thirty-two members were recorded as participating while additional interested members of Cold Lake First Nations came and went throughout the day. As is customary when matters of importance to the Nation are discussed, each person in attendance had an opportunity to express their thoughts about the proposed study and a number of matters were raised which required clarification with Chief and Council before proceeding with study planning. A second meeting, with Chief and Council in attendance, was called for the following week.

##### ***Community Scoping Meeting #2***

The second scoping meeting took place on October 31, 2011 at the English Bay Centre, facilitated by Chief and Council. Thirty-three Cold Lake First Nations members were in attendance for the meeting, with others coming and going throughout the day. When outstanding matters from the initial scoping meeting were discussed and clarified, planning for the pending traditional land use and occupancy study got under way.

It was agreed by consensus that a core group of Cold Lake First Nations members would guide the forthcoming investigations on behalf of all members, with the understanding that participation was open to all interested members of the Nation who were available. At the conclusion of this meeting, focussed discussions with the consultant researchers, specifically related to launching the traditional land use and occupancy study, were scheduled to begin the following day, under the direction of the guiding group.

### 3.1.2 Guiding Group

#### ***Guiding Group Meeting #1***

The first meeting with the study guiding group was held on November 1, 2011 at the English Bay Centre. In addition to the individuals who had been designated the day before (Section 3.1.1), a number of interested Cold Lake First Nations members and staff were also in attendance. Interested individuals were free to observe and participate as desired.

While the intended purpose of this meeting was to discuss the selection and coordination of participants for interviews and site visits, the guiding group thought it was imperative to first discuss the scope of the information collection for the study. Guiding group members were clear that the possible adverse effects to Cold Lake First Nations' use and occupancy of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* could only be understood within a regional context of cumulative impacts and encroachments on *Denne Ni Nennè*, and on the use of these lands.

It was therefore agreed that the scope of information collection and compilation, while focused on *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, would also include the broader history of Cold Lake First Nations' loss of lands and land use and build on information already existing and available through previous studies carried out by the Nation and in the documented Elder's oral histories. A second important outcome of this meeting was a preliminary orientation of the consultant study team to the depth of history, use, and the significance of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* to Cold Lake First Nations. This preliminary information was used in finalizing the interview guide and the plans for field visits.

There was also a great deal of discussion around the value and need to have the report written and presented in the *Dene* language. The fear that the project report would be misinterpreted or used against Cold Lake First Nations was expressed by various individuals, based on previous experiences. As was explained by individuals, fluent in both *Dene* and English, a statement in the *Dene* language cannot be interpreted in multiple ways, quite unlike statements in English language which can have many meanings. At the same time, it was recognized that the court itself must be able to read and understand the report contents. Moreover, the rendering of a report in the *Dene* language would be extremely time-consuming and beyond the timelines set for the report's submission.

As an alternative, it was decided that the guiding group would create a declaration on *Denesuline* land use occupancy and *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* to appear as a preamble to the report.

#### ***Guiding Group Meeting #2***

On November 2, 2011, a second guidance meeting was held to work on a community-defined outline for the report and the *Denesuline Declaration* described above as well as to further discuss participant selection and coordination of interviews and site visits. By the end of the meeting end a draft *Declaration* was completed and a tentative plan for interviews and site visits was created. Three members of the guiding group were designated to act as liaisons between the consultant study team and Cold Lake First Nations community members and assist in coordinating the interviews and meetings.

## 3.2 Literature/Records Review

The literature review carried out for this study included the examination of a wide range of archival and historical documents, reports, and texts, community-based studies and reports, and transcripts of oral

interviews completed for project-specific traditional use studies for environmental impact assessments. Traditional land use and occupancy maps and supporting documents which were prepared by Cold Lake First Nations for the Primrose Lake Air Weapons claim process in the 1990's, were also utilized, including the original occupancy and land use map which was created on 1:50,000 NTS map sheets and covers an entire wall in the PLC Building (that houses the Nation's Traditional Land Use office) at Le Goff Reserve (Photo 1.1). This Claim-related traditional land use and occupation documentation was prepared years in advance of the current study and contains information relevant to the lands in question and concerns expressed, even though the emphasis of the research and mapping at the time was focussed on the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range area. Digitized layers of this map were used in a number of study analyses and Cold Lake First Nations stands by its accuracy. A segment of this map was a repeated point of reference for study participants.



**Photo 1.1 Cold Lake First Nations Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Wall Map**

*“Anyway, this outline I’m telling you was just in relation to what happened in 1952. They didn’t talk about the south, further north or east. We only identified what affected the people from the Bombing Range, and how they displaced our people. And that was our reaction. A lot of this map came to be through the efforts of Armand [Loth]. He said he could name everything on that map. The information from way up top [of the map] we got that from Vic and Henry Machatis. So these spots had been contested by the government. And if we were wrong, we were only out as far as the school location. That’s how good the memory of the people is. This map really is the story of our people within our memory. Even after 50 years, their memory was intact; their memories were that good, because they know that land.... Anyway, the way we wrote this out, we did not manufacture this information.... We gathered as much information as was possible at that time and we were totally relying on people’s memories. Those memories are sharp. When you go to those spots and find those buildings, it wasn’t far from where they marked it on the map. They weren’t very far off, in their marking of the locations. The corrections weren’t great, if they were needed. People were describing where they were, exactly. So that’s how we created this map, and this became the story of our people. There, at that time. It will always be our story....What is on these maps is only a small spark of our history. Only between 1876*

*and 1952, that's all that's covered here.... And this map is the best; it's the most powerful statement of our people" (Alex Janvier 2010).*

Segments of the Indian Claims Commission Final Report on the Cold Lake and Canoe Lake Inquiry, related to Cold Lake First Nations are appended (Appendix A). Information from previous interviews with Cold Lake First Nations members that appears in this report is referenced with a discrete code that identifies both the individual and the project for which the information was collected (e.g. CLFN D7, where "D" refers to the project and "7" refers to an individual interviewed in that project).

### **3.3 Interviews and Mapping**

Seventeen Cold Lake First Nations individuals were interviewed for this project, including the mapping of spatial land use and occupancy information.

#### ***Interviews***

The consultant study team conducted all interviews. A total of 17 Cold Lake First Nations members were interviewed, representing a cross-section of families, gender, and age cohorts. Many are active harvesters with a variety of areas of expertise (e.g., experienced fishermen; specialized medicinal plant knowledge, detailed memory, orientation with maps). Information sharing consent was obtained in advance of each interview.

The interview process was flexible and open-ended. Broad questions were posed, primarily focussed on the traditional occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and anticipated impacts of the proposed redevelopment of English Bay Recreation Area. Respondents shared information as they wished.

Each individual was assigned a unique code identifier. Interview information that appears in this report is referenced with a discrete code identifying the individual and the project for which the information was collected (e.g. C1, C2, etc.).

#### ***Land Use and Occupancy Mapping***

Mapping during interviews was accomplished through the use of either paper maps or direct-to-GIS techniques depending on the location of the interview and the preferences of the participant. Paper maps were standard NTS topographic maps at scales of 1:10,000, 1:50,000 and 1:250,000. Features were marked and a unique ID code was assigned to each feature. Direct-to-GIS mapping was accomplished using Google Earth projected on the wall with a data projector. Study participants identified features using a laser pointer. These features were digitized directly into Google Earth and a unique identification code and description were recorded in the attribute table.

The mapping methodology focused on mapping use with which the respective informant had direct experience (i.e., not mapping second hand knowledge). Only locations where the participant had firsthand experience were mapped. This means, for example, that if a participant mentioned that others fished in a particular location, unless the participant had also fished there, that particular location was not mapped in the course of the interview. The mapped locations are not intended to represent the entirety of Cold Lake First Nations' knowledge and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

### **3.4 Field Visits**

Sites, areas and locales to be visited in the field were identified during the group and individual interview sessions. Two field visits took on consecutive days. The field study teams were comprised of Origins research consultants and Cold Lake First Nations Elders and harvesters familiar with *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

The sites, areas, and locales visited were recorded using hand-held GPS units and digitally photographed. Observations and additional information shared by field study participants were also recorded. Features were recorded using a Garmin GPS (model GPS Map 76S) and attribute information was recorded in field notebooks by the interviewers. GPS data was converted to shapefiles using the DNR Garmin utility and the attribute data was added in ArcGIS<sup>2</sup>.

### 3.5 Analysis and Reporting

Traditional use and occupancy studies do not fit comfortably within the existing legal and regulatory processes. The juxtaposition of differing worldviews complicates the process of analyzing and presenting information shared by study participants and presenting it in a form that can be used to foster an understanding of the issues being raised and their relevance to decision making processes.

Western conceptual frameworks do not accommodate *Denesuline* understandings of the world, which are based upon the inextricable relationships between beings (rather than things) and the inextricable connections between *the people* and *the land*, through time which cannot be reduced to specific 'sites' without stripping its meaning. The concept of harvesting, as one of countless examples, cannot readily be separated as a distinct category from the long-standing *Denesuline* cyclical patterns of use, occupancy, customs, traditions and practices within *Denne Ni Nennè*, and within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* in particular – all of which are reported upon by study respondents. Harvesting activities, moreover, encompass a myriad of connections and relationships, which have a direct bearing on *Denesuline* identity and overall health and well-being (physical, emotional and spiritual).

Because of the unique issues for Cold Lake First Nations, which are raised by the proposed construction plans for the English Bay Recreation Area, a concerted effort was made to provide relevant clarifying contextual background information related to *Denesuline* history and heritage and values, and relationships with *Denne Ni Nennè* by inclusion of a working document prepared for and with Cold Lake First Nations members.

Cross references are utilized extensively throughout the text of the report in recognition of the inextricable linkages between *the people* and *the land*. To the extent possible, the report has been crafted to allow the voices of the Cold Lake First Nations study participants to speak for themselves. Explanatory notes and summary comments within the text have been provided by the researchers with a view to clarifying matters discussed by study participants.

As mentioned before, in referencing information from interviews, all participants were given a unique identifier (C1, C2, etc.). In referencing specific information from community meetings, guiding group meetings, field visits and the results review meeting, a participant's unique identifier is used along with a reference to the particular information collection event as follows:

- Community Meetings (CM) – e.g., C2/CM#1, C2/CM#2
- Guiding Group Meeting (GG) – e.g., C2/GG#1, C2/GG#2
- Field Visits (FV) – e.g., C2/FV#1, C2/FV#2
- Review Meeting (R) – e.g., C2/R

In preparing the final maps for this report, digital files (Kml) were exported from Google Earth and imported into ArcGIS using the 'Import kml' utility retaining the associated attribute data. Mapping from hardcopy maps was digitized directly into ArcGIS and the ID codes and descriptions were added from the maps and interview transcripts. Participant mapping data was then verified through a careful review of interview transcripts to ensure that the information was complete and correct. The resulting

---

<sup>2</sup> Digital mapping software

shapefiles were processed to extract the interview participant codes and point classifications into separate database fields

The final cartographic documents include maps based on codes (use type), and maps of each participant's data. Maps were provided in PDF format and the associated data was converted to kml files for use in Google Earth using MapWindow 'Shape2KML' functionality. The maps prepared for the final report were consolidated from the information shared by members of Cold Lake First Nations members specific to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, recognizing that they do not represent all of Cold Lake First Nations members' knowledge of the area or its use thereof.

### **3.6 Study Results Review**

A preliminary draft Traditional Occupancy and Use report of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* was reviewed with Cold Lake First Nations guiding group members and other interested members on January 27, 2012 to ensure that the information which was mapped and the issues and concerns documented were fully presented and accurate.

### **3.7 Report Finalization**

On February 7, 2012 the final copy of the report filed with the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench.

## 4 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

Faced with a multiplicity of past, ongoing, and proposed encroachments within the *Denne Ni Nennè/Our Land*, Cold Lake First Nations members agreed that a synopsis of the Nation's history and heritage be written to consolidate traditional occupancy and use information which had already been gathered by the Nation over the past decades, starting with a specific claim related to the creation of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (CLAWR) (Appendix A).

*"The traditional land use studies have already been done. We have the information" (CLFN D6).*

*"Today, they are doing all kinds of studies, to make us prove our pre-existence on these lands. I think it is kind of foolish in a way to have to do that. But, we are put in a corner where we have to fend for ourselves, and everybody has to live with that system, whether we like it or not... whichever oil companies have the jurisdiction and the lease on that land, [they] need to take into consideration, our oral history and what we remember of what we were told of the lands and the significance of it for our people" (CLFN C6).*

*"The importance is the histories of our lands, and how we used all that land, not just the one...little spot. You can see from the humongous map<sup>3</sup> our land was huge" (CLFN D5).*

As a result, contextual documents were created as an explanatory backdrop of historical research and stories, strands, and fragments of the unique history and heritage of Cold Lake First Nations and the developments which have taken place within the Nation's traditional lands in the Cold Lake region. In effect they provide a "view from the inside" of Cold Lake First Nations and are intended to further some common understandings between the Nation, development projects operating within *Denne Ni Nennè*, and government legal and regulatory authorities. They are also envisioned to be a continually evolving foundational reference works for the Nation's current and future use which can be continuously augmented and updated.

Extracts of oral histories related to *Denesuline* values and traditions which have been gathered during the course of a number of different projects are presented, in combination with information derived from archival, historical, ethnographical and project-specific traditional use studies already in hand. These preliminary documents illustrate how contemporary life within the community continues to be rooted in *Denesuline* cultural traditions and values, despite the Nation's forced removal from *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)*, the Nation's centre while at the same time, adapted to the current realities of the industrial/global economy.

The synopsis which follows includes information about **the people** (*Denesuline*) and **the land** (*Denne Ni Nennè*) and the inextricable relationships between both (i.e. the cultural landscape). In addition, because non-Aboriginal encroachments within *Denne Ni Nennè* have a very strong bearing on the current situation, some Notes on historical **encroachments and developments** from the vantage point of Cold Lake First Nations, are also provided.

*"Those are the factors that led us to our stories....that's a way of dismissing our history....But our knowledge is based on traditional talk. So I think I'll rely on our people for our history, rather than on people who claim to know more than we do" (CLFN D10).*

From the perspective of study participants, these contextual documents are integral to understanding the issues and concerns being raised by Cold Lake First Nations in regard to the proposed redevelopment of English Bay Recreation Area within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (see Section 3.1. Study Scoping).

---

<sup>3</sup> Cold Lake First Nations' Claim TLUO Map, see Section 3.2.



## 4.1 **Denesuline – The People**

Cold Lake First Nations is a *Denesuline* Nation, a sub-group of the larger Athabaskan-speaking *Dene* Nation which extends from Alaska to Hudson Bay and includes different cultural groups such as the *Tlicho (Dogrib)*, *Dene Tha' (Slavey)*, *T'atsaot'ine (Yellowknife)*, and *Gwich'in*. The Athabaskan language group also extends much further south to include the *Tsuu T'ina (Sarsi)* in southern Alberta and Navajo and Apache in the American southwest (Figure 4.1). The *Denesuline* are the peoples who have long occupied the southern reaches of the interior boreal forest region of Canada, within the upper Churchill and Athabasca drainages.

As recorded in historical and ethnographical accounts, the *Denesuline* inhabiting the Lac La Biche - Cold Lake geographical region designate themselves as "*Thi-lan-ottiné*" – the people who live at the head of "*Yakké-elt'ine*" (a giant whose head sweeps the sky) and whose fallen form sculpted the lands *Denendeh* (Coutu and Hoffman-Mecredi 1999). Summarized in the following sections are some of the fundamental and inextricably connected *Denesuline* cultural values and tenets for living in respectful observance of the laws given to *the people*.

### 4.1.1 **Relationship with *The Land***

The harvesting of fish, wildlife, and plant materials has been the historical basis of Aboriginal peoples' lives and the foundation of diverse cultures. The significant reciprocal relationship that exists between humans and animals on which *the people* depend is the single most consistent feature of northern Athabaskan peoples' belief systems. As noted in Section 4.2, the concept of *The Land* for *Denesuline* peoples (and Aboriginal peoples as a whole), encompasses the sky, celestial bodies, the waters, the elements, and all living and non-living things, all of which are sentient and imbued with energy. Because all of creation (animate and inanimate) is recognized to be imbued with energies (spirit), and placed there by the Creator for *the people*, *Denesuline* connections to *Ni Nennè, (Our Land)* are fundamentally spiritual matters.

The inextricable spiritual connections which exist between Cold Lake First Nations *Denesuline* and *Denne Ni Nennè* are repeatedly stated by Cold Lake First Nations members.

*"The power of the people derived from the gifts of the Creator...The power that we had, and especially our people, were always thankful for what they had. They always remembered that there was a Creator that looked after them and gave them these things, and thank the Creator every day for all that we have"* (CLFN C5).

*"...the Maker of Everything. It was so beautiful. Everything was so powerful. Everything was alive. Even these trees could communicate with the people. The land, flowers, everything, little animals can communicate with the people. That's how powerful, that's how pure everything was"* (CLFN C45).

When humans act with care and respect, the animals and plants make themselves available for the people to use. The moose, fish and other animals and plants, offer themselves up to the hunters. The *land* is not owned by *the people*; they are the stewards. *Denesuline* peoples have long been instructed to take care of *the land* and its resources and ensure that the Creator's *gifts* are looked after for future generations. When people act wisely, *the land* provides an abundance of resources for all. On the other hand, if people are imprudent (disrespectful) in their actions, nature responds and the resources disappear. The wisdom of nature is the ultimate guide as to what is right and what is wrong.

*"We pay tobacco to Mother Earth. We thank that our Ancestors have left us many signs and we thank them very much for the gifts they left us"* (CLFN C7). *"Respect the land like you respect your mother"* (CLFN D30).

In the sacred reciprocal relationship between *the people* and *the land*, respect and acknowledgement by humans for the *gifts* provided by sentient beings is necessary. If the proper respect is not shown, the animals and plants will leave (see Section 4.1.2).

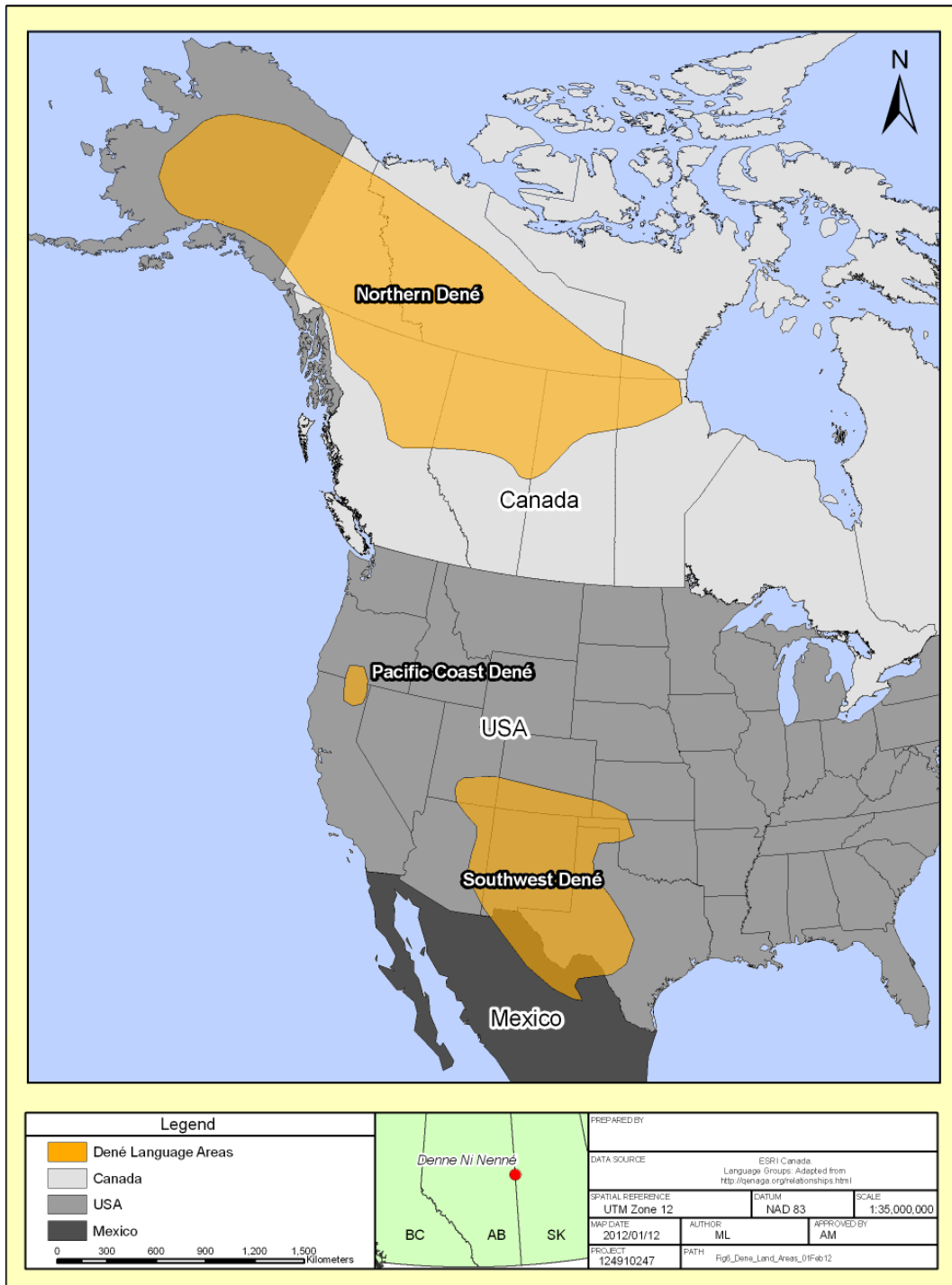


Figure 4.1 Dené Language Areas

*“Like when we go pick the berries and we do the hunts, we still show our respect with tobacco, our prayers and offerings. If I go to pick berries, I give tobacco, if I kill an animal, we thank the spirit and we leave tobacco” (CLFN D30).*

Health, medicine, and healing are intimately connected to this spiritual connection, which is in turn is connected to intact bush lands, lakes, streams and muskegs.

#### **4.1.2 Respect and Reciprocity**

In the *Denesuline* view of the world everything within *the land* has energy and everything is inter-connected – ‘we are all related’ (see Section 4.2.1). *The land* and its resources belong to all creatures and are to be shared by all. Humans are not superior to the creatures; they are equal. The most fundamental tenet of *Denesuline* teachings and beliefs is that humans are to act wisely in the natural environment, taking care to ensure that the abundance of *the land* will be there for future generations.

*“A lot of our people understood that....we are related. We are related to everything around us. And that’s how the respect needed to be shown at that time. They had no other way. They had to respect the land, the forces of nature because it was the law of nature that [prevailed]....It was common sense, and respect for each other, respect the land, that’s the law of nature; that’s what controls everything....” (CLFN C6).*

The ethic of respect for all living things and life cycles are emphasized repeatedly by *Denesuline* Elders. These concepts of respects are embedded in a myriad of customary practices such as *offerings/paying, take only what you need, no ‘playing’ with food (animals), no waste.*

*“So we say we respect, there’s respect even for medicine. If you’re going to fool around with this it’s not going to work” (CLFN D34).*

*“When they killed an animal, every part was used, there was no waste; everything was used. That includes moose, deer and caribou. Even rabbit skin was not wasted; they made blankets out of rabbit skins, which were braided by hand. And mattresses were made out of animal hair and pillows were made out of duck feathers. The men they made fox stretchers, coyote stretchers using carved wood to make stretchers, using a carving knife. They made nice fur stretchers with this sharp tool. They made muskrat stretchers etc. everything was made of dechene [wood]. They also made snowshoes, using caribou, deer hide, that’s how they made snowshoes” (CLFN C18).*

*“The thing is, even when taking that birch bark off the trees, and then you only do it a certain way, like you don’t destroy the tree.... We just took what you need. There we go again - only take what you need” (CLFN D34).*

*“My dad always made sure he shot a bear, they used the grease for lard, the hide for floor rug to sleep on. In all they did not waste any of the animal parts, even the moose guts and nose, was a delicacy to the Indian people” (CLFN C69).*

Entailed in the principle of respect for the land is that there be no unnecessary disturbance to *the land*. As described by members of Cold Lake First Nations, for example, there would be little in the way of tangible evidence related to human use of *the land* since *Denesuline* principles and customs regarding ‘respect for the land’ prescribe the *cleaning up* of ‘everything’ before leaving a camp (see Section 4.1.2). Only the campfire stones would remain along with wood tent poles and tripods which would be carefully stored away for use another time.

*“In English Bay right now, where our own campsite is, if you had a group of Elders camping out there you don’t see that junk and dirt and everything, because even when you make a fire that fire is an offering too. So, they always make sure that everything is put back, like the sand and earth so that the grass around there is not disturbed. You can sit there on the grass and enjoy your campout.” (CLFN D34).*

*“Setting up white tents was easy: there were four families, my mom and myself. We stayed in those big white tents. They were easy to set up. We carried the canvas with us. We’d leave the posts, so they’d always be there for whoever was going to use the area. We’d leave firewood if anything was left over. Just use what is there, and put some more back before you go” (CLFN D13).*

*“My grandma used to have a pile of sticks that she used to dig out from someplace under a tree so she could set up her tent again. She just came back year after year” (CLFN D15).*

Common occurrences in the present time such as clearing and bulldozing, trampling of berry bushes and leaving of garbage are viewed as extremely disrespectful acts.

Respect extends to human relationships with an emphasis on getting along well with others, acknowledging individual differences and not interfering in the ways of others. No one has rights above another; all are equal seekers of understanding and seekers of good health and happiness. Prevailing non-aboriginal beliefs and practices often clash with *Denesuline* worldviews and values related to respectful living with *the land* and *waters*.

*“I think that some of the people that are not aware of things, they do things differently. The native people that set up their camps, they only take what they need” (CLFN D34).*

*“I wanted to say that the people when they went fishing, they didn’t throw anything into the lake. They would dig a trench and throw all the stuff that they didn’t use, like the guts of the fish. They would put it in the ground. They would cover it; they’d bury it. And later on, when the white people came to fish, they would throw all the guts and fish into the lake. Even then, they started to pollute the lake” (CLFN D32).*

*“A lot of times I argue with the white man. I told them, “You guys just want to make money out of this. You’re not there to find out what is good for the country; you just want to make money. But we respect our things [the land], the way it was and the way it will be. We don’t bother it. You know what I mean? You don’t make money out of a place. But then, as soon as they find something strange, they go for it. Try to make extra money” (CLFN D36).*

### **4.1.3 Livelihood and Adaptation**

Over thousands of years of adaptation to the exigencies of boreal forest ecologies, *Denesuline* peoples learned how to survive - keeping families fed, clothed, and nurtured in a total economy; total both in terms of production and the circulation of goods based exclusively on local resources (see Brody 1981). Labour was organized on the basis of gender and age, with everyone playing a vital role. Through countless generations, a broad range of tools, techniques and practices evolved, based on profound respectful relationships with *the land*.

All family members were involved in harvesting and took pride in the effort. Children accompanied adults or older siblings, helping out and learning.

*“Everybody had to be good at something...nobody was lazy them days....The trappers mainly trapped for squirrels, weasels, lynx, mink, rabbits, muskrats, beaver. My sister...and I used to snare chickens for supper, along a river bank, in the willows, using a 10 foot pole and snare wire. My mother used to make blankets out of rabbit skins, which she braided and lined it with material and everybody use to do that too. That was done, also with duck feathers, and we had nice warm blankets for winter, cold nights which were alright” (CLFN C69). “[My mother] “used to trap weasels around the house” (CLFN C35).*

For *Denesuline* peoples, the concept of livelihood is much broader than a cash income; it is a way of ‘*living*’ and ‘*being*’ in accordance with ancient laws and values and grounded in thousands of years of survival on the land as mobile hunters and gatherers. The harvesting of foods, medicines, and other resources from *Denne Ni Nennè* represents both the means and ends in life. Hunting, fishing, and trapping – self-sufficiency, survival, and feeding the family from the material and spiritual bounty of *the land* (sun, air, water, fire, trees,

plant life, rocks, and all the animals) - are primary constituents of *right livelihood* integral to *Denesuline* identity.

*"And those days, we say it was hard but today I think it was an easy life because there was no money involved; everybody lived off the land. Everything [came from the land]" (CLFN C7).*

*"My dad was a busy man he was out all day long. And [when he] comes back [with] all his fur my mother, my grandmother they all got together, to help each other. Make up/clean up all the animal hides. They'd dry them, they'd put them together and they used to hang them up on the ceiling like this. Bunch of them. Squirrels, and muskrat, beaver. And bigger animals like wolves and coyotes; they'd hang outside, away from the dogs, way up on a tree or something. So the dogs wouldn't get at it" (CLFN C7).*

The activities and pleasures associated with obtaining and preparing food for the family and community served to bring people together and contribute to health, wellbeing, and longevity. The securing, processing, and use of resources was a shared effort, filled with laughter and good humour.

*"Our people knew how to preserve everything - the food, the meat, the fish, everything. Any kind of medicine that they picked was for their own use, it was for their own use, family use. And I remember having the best meals possible, the healthy meals we used to have because it came from our land and it was always cooked or dried. Those meals I can remember because they were so good" (CLFN C5).*

*"It was good living; it was very healthy, because we lived off the land. Everything we eat off the land was good food" (CLFN C69).*

*"In the meantime, some would be making dry meat and pemmican, and at the same time people were happy and lots of laughter. The men were having fun" (CLFN C67).*

*"Then, we ate everything from the bush, we never went to town. My dad never went to town to go buy fresh meat, eggs, every day, like today, what we do. We had all our meat cached away in the winter for the fall time. They made pemmican and dry meat, dried fish, pemmican fish, all kinds of good stuff. They prepared their food, their grease; animal grease. And the berries were always so good in the winter because they were all kept in birch bark baskets; different sizes. And grandmother used to go out, she tells us, 'I am going to go get some berries.' I used to wonder, how come there's berries out in the winter. I said, 'I'll go with you.' She said, 'No, the snow is too deep, too hard for you to go pick berries.' And then she'd come home with fresh berries in a basket. I guess she used to hide them in the cache and that's where she got her blueberries" (CLFN C7).*

*"[M]oose, deer, bear, those were made into dry meat pemmican. To make pemmican it took a long time to prepare. When the meat was dried, dry they took an axe which they used to make pemmican, and used rocks and canvas which was used to put the meat in [canvas]. Bear meat, geese, pemmican, moose and deer were done the same way. All or most parts of the body were used, ribs, bones were put over the fire, which they ate. Even in the summertime they ate the meat, even it was hot out, because the meat was kept cold, from being put under the moss, and the meat was never spoiled. It was the same with berries, some were dried. In white man's way it was canning berries in jars. It wasn't like that because there was no such thing as jars....At that time they made birch bark baskets and filled the baskets and covered and buried them under the moss and muskeg. That is why the people back then were very healthy" (CLFN C66).*

A wide variety of materials were harvested in addition to food and medicines. *Dechene* (wood), for example, was used in the fabrication of equipment such as toboggans, and snowshoes; baskets were crafted from birch bark; willows and poplar were gathered for smoking meat and hides; homes were constructed from trees and heated with wood and moss was collected to chink log homes or line baby carriers (in place of diapers). From the time of birth and before, the energies of *the land* sustained people's health.

*"It was good, pleasant heat 'cause it was wood, wood heat.... Kind of like indirect sunlight, because the trees grow from the sunlight. Grow with the sunlight. It's healthy heat. Maybe that's why people used to live long in that time" (CLFN C35).*

*"This is why I say I am so lucky I was born on the land, on hay - not in a hospital- because I get all the energy, directly with the earth, the trees, the air. My grandmother had told me a lot about [these things]. Years ago, babies were born, they were stuck in the moss bag. They cried to be back in the moss bag when they were wanting to sleep. Put them in a moss bag, you rolled them up, they're sleeping. And they wake up and they just make a little sound and you untie them and they stretch and play" (CLFN C7).*

Cold Lake First Nations members describe how the sometimes harsh conditions of making a living were counterbalanced by the aesthetics of *the land*, simple pleasures, and intangible energetic connections.

*"We were poor, I guess, but we were happy....You could be out there.... you would have a good stove and oil lamps, and cook outside. And that used to be good, you know. I mean to us; maybe to some of the younger people it doesn't sound as good. We survived like that" (CLFN D20).*

*"Even though life was tough and life was hard, our people overcame that by just living with the beauty of the land and what the land, the "Creator" offered the people of the land" (CLFN C6).*

*"Winter months were very harsh, snow was four feet high and the ice was about four to five feet deep. It felt like it was sixty below, maybe it was. You could tell by the crackling of the trees, you're in for it. A lot of times, you get lost when a blizzard comes along without warning. When you are out on the lake fishing and a blizzard comes along, you let the horses go, on a caboose, they know where to go, go home. You just let them go, even if you think they are not right, they are right, they bring us home" (CLFN C69).*

*"Along the way, when I was a young kid my dad used to shoot chickens, Maybe five or six chickens and my mom would fry it wherever we had camp, to eat and my mother would always use, save even the feathers, to make pillows....then she had enough feathers to make a pillow and so on. Everybody helped one and other. They always saved every part of the animal, even the sack from the chicken from their [crop], where they eat. Used to play with them, used to blow them up and that would be our toys, our balloons. We just put a little seed in there, hang them up over the stove and it dries up that way. Those were our balloons we called them, we played with them" (CLFN C7).*

As a result of increasing immigration to the Cold Lake region, beginning in the 1930s, a number of new settlement-related seasonal economic opportunities became available to Cold Lake First Nations. (Commercial fishing opportunities were even earlier.) These supplemental livelihood options were easily accommodated within the adaptable opportunistic *Denesuline* mixed traditional economy (e.g., trapping, hunting, commercial fishing and small scale farming), largely centered on *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)* in the winter and *Louwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)* in the summer. For example, the railroads being built in the region required ties and labour; lumber was required for buildings; land had to be cleared for planting; and crops needed to be harvested. Through the early 1900s until 1952, Cold Lake First Nations was involved in the operation of many lumbering camps and sawmills within *Denne Ni Nennè*, primarily north of Cold Lake.

*"Those tie camps were about 50 years ago, in the 40s and 50s. They'd take the logs, throw them in the river, and run them down the river. They had booms and they'd bring them across the lake. They were always working up there, the Cold Lake people" (CLFN D2).*

*"Like I say, our people worked in all kinds of things and that winter, I remember there was logging on, and everybody worked and even I as a young kid, I must have been nine or ten years old at that time in 1951. I cooked for the men that were in camp - that lived around - so that they could have breakfast and go out to work" (CLFN C5).*

*"The logging wasn't done for our use. It was for some big logging companies. This is where the outside people started to take from our land, and is still doing so today" (CLFN D5).*

Firefighting was another seasonal occupation that many Cold Lake First Nations men and women engaged in, willingly or not. When fires erupted, men were conscripted into firefighting service by local law enforcement authorities. Women had the opportunity to obtain wage employment as camp cooks and cook's helpers. *Denesuline* firefighting crews would be dropped off at bush camps throughout *Denne Ni Nennè*. The

camaraderie of shared labour and camp life allowed time for storytelling, joking, and sharing knowledge of the land. Post 1952, firefighting was one of the few opportunities for Cold Lake First Nations members to be on traditional lands within the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range.

Other seasonal sources of income for the Nation's members involved work as agricultural labourers, both locally and in the southern Alberta sugar beet fields. The harvesting of seneca root<sup>4</sup> in the region was also an important source of cash.

*“Seneca root was collected at Le Goff and sold for cash at the local stores. Seneca root was also obtained at what is now 149C, or wherever there was sand. The seneca root was used for medicines. This happened around the 50s and I was still doing this 2 years ago. Brosseau’s store in Bonnyville would buy the seneca root” (CLFN D18).*

#### **4.1.4 Sharing, Cooperation and Collective Effort**

The central tenets of *Denesuline* survival depend upon sharing and collective and cooperative efforts. In marked contrast to mainstream Canadian society, sharing and collective and cooperative effort, within extended family kinship groups and the community at large, is a distinguishing feature of all aspects of everyday life in the community. In *Denesuline* societies, every person has a part to play in relation to the well-being of the group.

*“In August, people traveled up north to make hay, getting ready for the winter food for the animals. My dad was the hunter, while the rest of the guys cut hay; this was preparing hay and food for the winter months. For haying and stacking hay, they made forks out of willow sticks. Those days, people worked very hard, including children. This was not easy for the children, they had to look after the horses, make smudge for horses, because flies were so bad. There was so much horse flies and little ones [black flies]. To prevent flies from getting into the horses’ ears, we used axle grease. Also the women made fancy ear muffs for the horses when we traveled. My aunt, mother, grandmother, were the ones who prepared the meat when it came in. They made dry meat and everything that they fixed up. Then we eat good! They prepared the hide [and] within three or four days I was wearing new moccasins; that’s how fast they were making moose hides. They had a factory right there [chuckle]. The old men made the hide stretchers with four poles in a square shape. And that’s how people started to prepare for the winter” (CLFN C69).*

Special attention and care is provided to the community's old and young. Sharing and thoughtful actions are the norm. Leaving firewood and food at camp sites, hay for the next travellers who come along, and moss for diapering babies, were standard practices.

*“Everybody was kind to one another. People shared food and goods amongst each other, providing for those in need. For example, there were always extra blankets for hunters who would be out late far from their homes...for the next people to come through, because whatever was used from a camping area the men would go out and replace the wood they used and there was always a pot, kettle hanging up in the tree and it always stayed there for people to use. And I also remember there used to be moss hanging around the area on trees 'cause a lot of young women, those days, had babies and they used moss bags. There was always moss and there was always, it's always been near a lake or a creek where people had access to get the water and that's how we lived and if there was any food, they'd hang the food up in the tree. You know, away from birds or dogs, animals. So, they always left food, always. Even berries, fish, dry meat there was always a gunny sack. Whatever was left, some people didn't have all that kind of food because they... travelled small. Some only had dog teams and they could load up everything... whatever was left...and the next person brought whatever. There could be a tea pot with enough tea in there to make tea. And that's how everybody helped one and other. Along the way they, everybody was together and they helped one and other, every time and all the time” (CLFN C7).*

---

<sup>4</sup> Seneca is widely used in pharmaceuticals.

*“People knew each other. They lived close to one another. The people that were running short of food and people shared” (CLFN C66).*

*“I used to have my tub by the creek, where I used to go and wash. And then later on my friend she got a washing machine, you know one of those that you just put things through the wringer [making arm motions to show]. Well we thought that we got a real automatic one like they do today, and I used to go down there and we used to do all our washing. We used to help each other lots. We used to do all our washing, we would help each other, we’d do our washing. And we had a garden, too, we both had gardens, and then we’d help each other with our gardens, you know, weeding the gardens, and then we would go berry picking. Like I say, we did a lot of things together and we never thought of ever getting paid for anything we did. We did it because we wanted to help each other” (CLFN D32).*

The ethic of sharing extends beyond human interactions to sharing and respectful and reciprocal relationships with *the land* and the life sustaining resources which she provides (see Section 4.1.1). Resources are shared and everything taken is used.

*Denesuline* principles of sharing and generosity were extended to other First Nations, particularly in the late 1800’s when Plains Nations were faced with starvation due to the demise of the buffalo and in later years to Euro-Canadian immigrants/settlers who arrived in the Cold Lake region, ill-equipped for life in the bush. There are numerous stories of such encounters.

#### **4.1.5 Stories and Oral History**

Residing within the collective memory of the Nation, and evident in the information provided by Elders in the course of studies conducted within *Denne Ni Nennè*, are numerous ancient stories related to *Dene* peoples’ origins and history. As noted by George Blondin (1990), “The [Dene] people have a complete history of themselves from very ancient times, told in the stories they have passed down for countless generations. There are stories about stone-age people in the beginning of the new world and through the ages since, from long ago until time just before our own.” Everything was held in memory and handed down from generation to generation by the historians and storytellers. In the oral tradition, information is spread among a wide group of people; no one Elder knows the complete story. Stories are spread among many people. It is through repeated and continuous contact that the complete stories are known (see Venne 1997).

Cold Lake First Nations members often describe how they have been taught from an early age by *Zatnedhe (respected Elders)* about the laws and stories related to *Denne Ni Nennè*, and the sacred truths embodied within them.

*“A long ago, the Elders told me stories; that is why I learned from their stories and about Primrose. At a very young age, I sat with the Elders because I wanted to learn about how they lived a long time ago” (CLFN C66).*

*“The natives have passed on stories to grandchildren. Like my grandparents used to tell me a lot of stories and I do follow the Elders words because they are true as it is today” (CLFN C7).*

Ancient stories about *Yamoria*, a powerful medicine person who set the laws for *Dene* peoples to follow in living and caring for *the land* are recounted by Elders. Many other stories are told about ancient floods<sup>5</sup> and the time of giants - humans, animals and fish - and how their interactions shaped the land. Some of these interactions were adversarial and resulted in physical land forms (see Blondin 1990, Coutu Mecredi Hoffman 1999).

*“Our people talk about the world disappearing two times....They talked about the volcanoes and things like that. And also the Ice Age that they had to go through; The people had to live through that. The way I can remember it is...wherever it started melting, that’s where people moved after the Ice Age” (CLFN D10).*

---

<sup>5</sup> Flood legends have been corroborated with geological events (see Cruickshank 2005)



According to one of the ancient stories about the shaping of the vast lands within *Denendeh* by arctic giants relates to *Louwe Chok Touwe/Cold Lake* as the place where the head of the giant, *Otchôpè*, fell.

*"In the time of the giants, 'He Whose Head Sweeps the Sky,' Yakké-elt'ini, used to wander by the Arctic Ocean. One day he met another giant whose name was Bettsinuli and they engaged in a fierce fight. Bettsinuli was the stronger of the two and would surely have won, but 'He Whose Head Sweeps the Sky' was saved by a Dene man, whom he was protecting, who cut the back of Bettsinuli's ankle with an axe made of a giant beaver's tooth. The bad giant fell backwards into the sea in such a manner that his feet lay in the West and his head rested in our own country. His head reached the area around Cold Lake, and it is for this reason the Dene of these parts call themselves Thi-lan-ottiné, 'the people of the end of the head'" (Petitot 1893 quoted in Coutu and Hoffman-Mercredi 1999)<sup>6</sup>.*

#### 4.1.5.1 The Underground Rivers

There are many ancient stories that have been passed down from *Denesuline* Elders about the underground rivers and water within *Denne Ni Nennè* and how muskegs, springs, lakes and streams are all connected.

*"Grandfather used to say there must be...the contour of the lake underneath we don't know what it looks like, you know; all I can tell you is that it's very deep by the island [Det'ani Nue/Eagle Island] beyond the island on the Saskatchewan side there. Very very deep. We've commercial fished and we couldn't fathom it....So maybe there's rivers underneath....Or caves...but there's rivers all over underneath the lake and that" (Marie Cunningham nee Nest, in Hildebrandt and Thorpe 1993).*

*"Primrose Lake, Cold Lake, and Marie Lake are all connected by the underground water channels. This is why there is such concern from the people about using the underground water" (CLFN D34).*

*"Sometimes you catch real black fish and that's from being underground, in the underwater streams, and they don't get any sunlight. That's how you can tell if the fish are from underwater streams. Even over here, I caught a fish way back on this other map. It's called Reita Lake. Even there I caught a pike what was all black" (CLFN D29).*

The underground river currents are reputed to be very powerful and are connected to a large underground river system.

*"There's a current down there too" (CLFN D14). "Yes, we set our net there one time; in the morning. When we pulled it up it was all in one great big ball. We couldn't even untangle it. We just had to throw it out, just like that" (CLFN D2).*

*"The other thing, too,...the water coming in [to Cold Lake]; isn't there supposed to be a mile-wide underground current coming in to the lake?...But we don't know that for sure. It comes out where that Cold Lake island is....They figure that's where it is" (CLFN D1). "It's right at the mouth of the Martineau River, right here. It's called the "Beaver Hole" in Déné. It's right at the Martineau River" (CLFN D15).*

*"[At Boswick Point]...the water moving in there, it's bad currents around there. This is an area where there's dangerous water; in the winter the ice heaves up" (CLFN D2).*

*"Well they got some channels, various channels from Alex all the way around to English Bay, to French Bay, even to Martineau River. After Martineau River they are all separated" (CLFN D36).*

Members of Cold Lake First who have worked in the oil and gas industry in the Cold Lake region have personally experienced the intense pressure in water wells drilled within *Denne Ni Nennè*, specifically south of the CLAWR. This experience confirms the ancestral stories about the underground river system and the relationships to the deep channel in Cold Lake – *Tsa'ʔaghe*, the Beaver Hole.

---

<sup>6</sup> The Legend of *Otchôpè*, the Arctic Giant, was recorded by Bishop Taché in 1851 at Ile a la Crosse and was confirmed by Emile Petitot during his time with Cold Lake First Nations (Coutu and Hoffman-Mercredi 1999).

*“There could be underground creeks going that way [indicating direction]...Between Ardmore and Fort Kent here, it’s supposed to be a mile wide and 60 feet deep....The one that I found was between Ardmore and Fort Kent; that was with Esso...I know, when I used to load up the truck, I asked the guys, is there a pump? And they said, ‘you don’t need a pump.’ As soon as you turn it over 6 times, your truck is already going to be full. That’s how much pressure is down there....Down at that Wolf Lake plant, they can just get water from that” (CLFN D2).*

Cold Lake First Nations members report that similar stories about the underground river system are to be found within other Nations as well.

*“Frog Lake and Saddle Lake have the same stories. There’s a big river, underground, connecting everything” (CLFN D15).*

#### **4.1.6 Named/Storied Places**

Ancient place names are evidence of long-time occupancy (Tobias 2009). The detailed extent of *Denesuline* naming of landscape features within *Denne Ni Nennè*, which is the result of an accumulation of knowledge from hundreds/thousands of years of continuous living in relationship with the same lands.

*“...all the lakes, Primrose Lake [Ah ‘Tue], Martineau River [Ah Deze] Cold Lake [Łouwe Chok ‘Tue], Hin ‘tel ‘Tue [Marie Lake], it’s all in our language. And place names like that, when it’s in the language you can’t separate the tongue, it’s in the blood, you can’t separate the roots of the trees and pull them out, it’s like the rivers, they are the veins of ‘Mother Earth’ and the trees are like the hair” (CLFN C6).*

Cold Lake First Nations members report that, in large measure, *Denne Ni Nennè* has been officially renamed by outsiders (e.g. governments, missionaries, surveyors, municipalities). Moreover, the renaming of lakes, rivers, and ancestral settlements within *Denne Ni Nennè* has been a unilateral action, without consideration and/or awareness of the implications to the original peoples, Cold Lake First *Denesuline*.

*“...it’s not Cold lake. It’s called [Łouwe Chok Touwe, ‘lake of the big fish’. That’s what it originally is. It’s not Cold Lake. In DénéSunline, t’s Łouwe Chok Touwe” (CLFN D15).*

Ah ‘Tue (Primrose Lake) for example, was renamed by Dominion Land Surveyors in 1909 (FMA 2006).

The failure to retain Dene place names substantially contributes to a gradual process of assimilation (Tobias 2009; Coutu and Mecredi-Hoffman 1999). With the accelerated pace of industrial development, current and planned for the Cold Lake region/*Denne Ni Nennè*, the process will be accelerated..

*“They changed all the names too, so it confuses the people” (CLFN D32).*

*“Why can’t we see our names on our maps? ...It shows respect for our ancestors and it would give our children pride to see ‘our’ language on maps. There is honour in hearing our words spoken. Removing our names is a means of disconnection us from our land. Foster Creek and Ethel Lake mean nothing to us” (CLFN B35).*

The extent of *Denesuline* naming within *Denne Ni Nennè* is virtually outside the conceptual grasp of most Canadians. In Alberta, this is particularly so, because of the influx of non-aboriginal migrants to the ‘new frontier lands’, a phenomenon even more pronounced with the unprecedented scale of oilsands developments which is severing Cold Lake First Nations members from intimate relationships with *the land*. Without these enduring relationships the knowledge dies with the Elders (Tobias 2009).

#### **4.1.7 Intergenerational Transmission of History, Knowledge and Values**

*Denesuline* history, customs, practices, and traditions are learned and passed down orally. *“They are not recorded on books or anything like that” (CLFN C7).*

Within the traditions of *Denesutline* societies, children are taught the necessary skills by listening to stories, observing, watching, and carefully emulating Elders.

*“The Elders were like teachers. They didn’t force us to ‘do this, do that’, but by listening and looking and asking I learned. After all, I was raised by the Elders. I never answered back to them....As a young man I was taught traditional ways by watching the old folks, that is why if I learned, I could survive like them” (CLFN C67).*

Parents, grandparents and the entire extended family take an active role in supporting and providing younger generations with opportunities for learning by quiet observation. Children are taken on the *land* and shown *Denesutline* ways of being and surviving.

*“The young girls were taught how to make hides, skin animals, skin beavers, this is how they were teaching the young people by Elderly women. Young men were taught by Elderly men - how to hunt, to make snowshoes, stretchers” (CLFN C18).*

*“[As] a child I used to run with my grandmother, by a lake, wherever we lived and go checking our muskrats. These ones [referring to the trap] were used for muskrats and weasels...for every muskrat homes that we found...she made a hole in there and she put a stick, a long stick because there’s a lot of snow over the...muskrat houses. She...taught me how to set the snare, how to chop the hole in the house and put the snare in... the traps inside it. And she made this, this chain sticking out of the house and then she put the pole in there, long pole. So each pole had a muskrat home and...she taught me all that...Twice a day she went for her, her muskrats along the lake like this. And she made a lot of money, even by herself. The women made money also by trapping their furs and...this is how I know this trap has been used here for muskrats houses....These traps were useful to everybody in the home, in the cabin, all winter long that was their livelihood. That was how they made a living” (CLFN C7).*

Knowledge about such things as the best places for fishing, times of the year for spawning, and depths of the lake, and numerous other matters related to harvesting are orally transmitted from generation to generation.

*“So, even along English Bay here, where the campsite is, in the summertime, some people would go there, to set nets for like whitefish. They knew exactly where to set. And then the ones that are camping here, like my brother and the younger ones, they used to get trout, so at a certain time, like we are saying, that everything is harvested” (CLFN D34).*

*“The fish are at different depths, at different times, and the Indian people know that, they learned that through the years. So in the fall they went fishing here, another time, like in the spring, they’d go fishing there because the fish are spawning there” (CLFN D2).*

*“I learned a lot from [my Dad]. I used to hunt with him lots, and he was a really good hunter and trapper. He was good. I’m sure that [my cousin] learned a lot from him too.... Most of the native people here knew where the fish were at all different times of the year. So they knew how to set their nets, according to how the fish were moving. It was like a science, knowing all about the different kinds of fish” (CLFN D1).*

Through these teachings, the detailed knowledge and histories of places, activities, and events which have occurred on the *land* are woven into the complex fabric of culture, heritage, and identity which serves to ground the Nation’s members, individually and collectively.

*“Our grandchildren have experienced steady use of the land until my husband died. My sons and I would still go into the bush; we showed them different things. I talk about traditions and culture; I try to live it. If I don’t live it, it’s just empty words” (CLFN D5).*

#### **4.1.8 Governance**

Traditional leadership within *Denesutline* hunting bands was fluid, based on the skills and experience necessary for the particular task at hand. *Denesutline* leadership comes from *the bottom up*. That is to say,

leaders, headmen (*nátthe theyi*, “the one who stands in front”) are selected by the community, as required, on the basis of knowledge and understanding of the matter at hand. A designated leader’s ability to “carry the words of the people” determines the duration of the leadership role. Leaders are directly responsible and accountable to the members of the collective group (direct democracy). Members follow leaders out of choice and are free to leave at any time.

*“Those guys [old John Blackman and his contemporaries], they talked with people, and from the people. The power was from the people” (CLFN D10).*

*“That how [named former chief] was able to do that for so many years, because he listened to what people had to say” (CLFN D5).*

When they arose, disputes/differences in opinion were customarily resolved through quiet discussion with Elders, with a view to the welfare of the collective group (CLFN D10). If agreements could not be reached, dissenting parties simply removed themselves. This is still the norm.

As noted by Cold Lake First Nations members, even though there might be internal divisions within the community, when it’s necessary, the Nation’s families and members make decisions based on the interest and benefit of the community as a whole.

*“Inevitably when the community as a whole is threatened, we have always managed somehow to come together. We always do” (CLFN D26).*

#### **4.1.9 Gatherings**

Throughout *Denne Ni Nennè*, Cold Lake First Nations’ traditional lands, and beyond there are numerous village settlements and multi-family camps where *Dénésuline* peoples gathered annually in the summer months to celebrate, pray, confer, arrange marriages, and relax. These gathering places are all situated near fishing lakes with an abundance of animals and berries nearby to support many families. Such areas are described as “living on the land places.” As part of the annual seasonal round, dry fish and dry meat were processed and berries picked and preserved. The gathering areas were often visited by traders looking for furs to buy (C20).

*Denesuline* settlements closest to Cold Lake include *Des Cha Kue (Ile a la Crosse)*; La Loche; *Ah ‘Tue to Ou Ni Dahi Chok ‘Tue (Winefred Lake)* and Cowper Lake; *Ejere Mai ‘Tue (Heart Lake)*; *T’ok ‘Tue (Meadow Lake)*; Buffalo Hills/Dillon; and Chittick Lake (within the present provinces of both Saskatchewan and Alberta).

*“The real central part of [our territory] was Suckerville. This was the southern people’s capital of the Dene ... west of Primrose Lake. Other Dene Nations were inter-linked. People from La Loche would come here and converge” (CLFN D10).*

Places within *Denne Ni Nennè* where many families gathered include *K’ai Hucila (Willow Point)*, English Bay/DogTown, French Bay, *Hoka (Suckerville)*, and *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (Figure 4.2). Families from surrounding Nations visited these gatherings. Cold Lake First families similarly visited other communities.

Christmas and New Year was also was an important time for winter gatherings and celebrations (feasting, games, dancing) at *Hoka/Suckerville* and Cold Lake when the trappers came in from the traplines. *Déné* gatherings continue on as an annual event, hosted by different Nations. The gatherings are regularly attended by Cold Lake First Nations members. They continue to be times for relaxation, games and discussion of matters of importance.

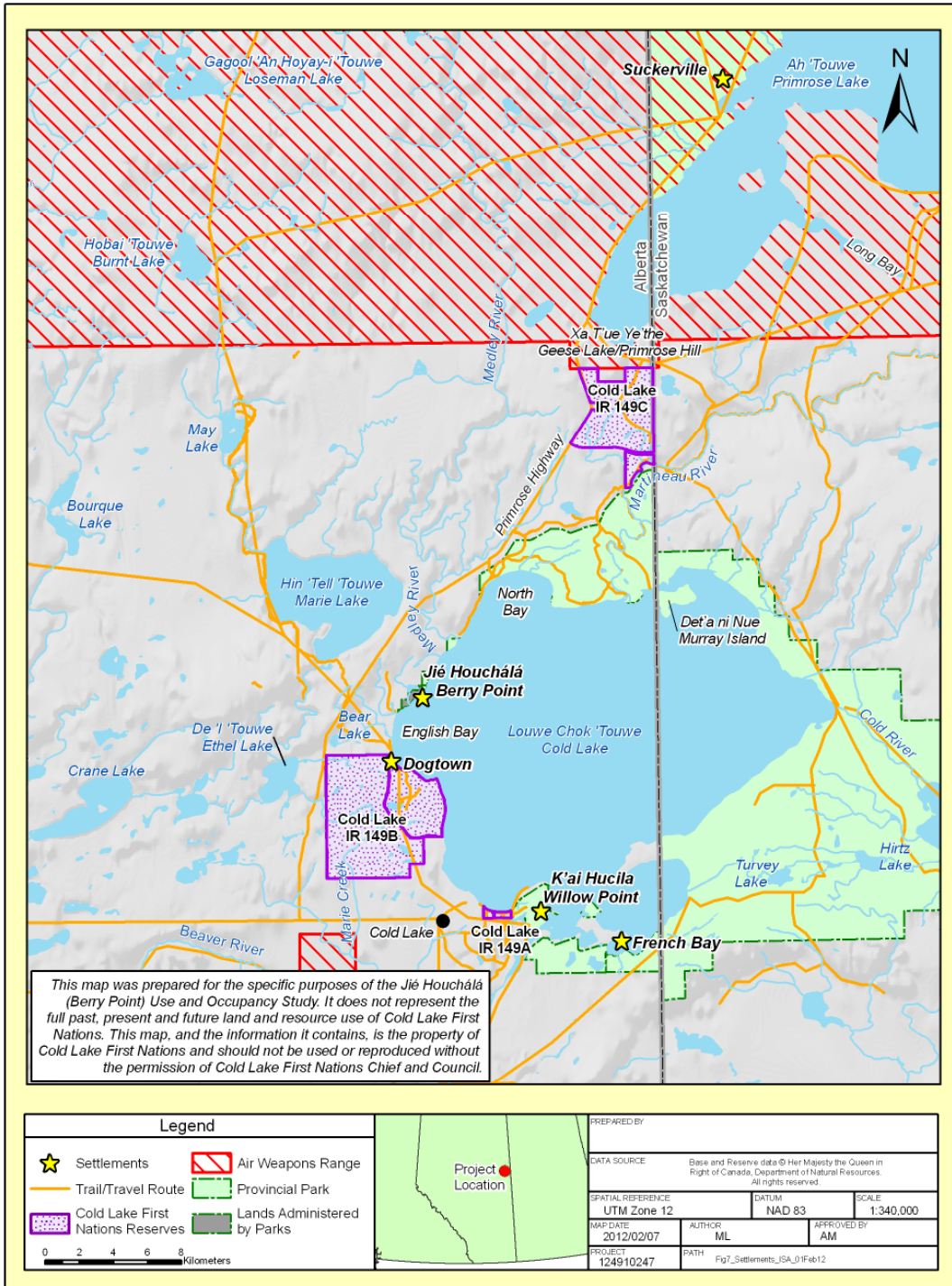


Figure 4.2 Gathering Places

#### 4.1.10 Clans, Families and Kinship

*Denesuline* clans are matriarchal (CLFN D4). "When something important had to be discussed and decided the men would talk it through, sometimes for days, and come to a decision. When they had come to their decision, they would ask an elderly woman to join them and ask her what she thought. If she agreed to the decision they had made, then it would go ahead. The women weren't bosses. They reviewed the final decision to ensure it was good for the whole community." (C7)

"From the early 1900's marriages were arranged, but not any more...That went on for a long time, all the old people that we knew about, they were all arranged marriages" (CLFN D4). Women went to live in their husband's communities (C7).

Clan and family genealogies and histories were maintained in the oral tradition by women (CLFN A10). For the most part they have not been systematically recorded in text form by Cold Lake First families. As one example of the complexity of a clan's history from outside recorded sources, the Janvier family name has its origins in the early fur trade and the presence of North West Company traders in the region. Between 1779 and 1781, Gladu Janvier, an *engage*' of the company from Lower Canada (Quebec), married a *Denesuline* woman from the Cold Lake region. A number of children resulted from their union, among which were twin sons, Jean Pierre/Basile (*Zanhi*) and Jean Baptiste, born in 1782. The elder Janvier returned to eastern Canada after amalgamation of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821 (see Appendix B Section 4.7.2.1). Jean Baptiste is the ancestor of the Janviers of Portage La Loche. Jean Pierre/Basile, *Zanhi*, is the forefather of the Janviers of Cold Lake. When his father returned to eastern Canada, *Zanhi* was engaged by the Chief Factor in charge of Hudson's Bay Company post at Beaver Crossing as a hunter and post provisioner (Legal 1914). *Zanhi*'s son, *Uldai/Jackfish*, signed Treaty 6 at Fort Pitt on behalf of Cold Lake First in 1876.

*Zanhi*'s long established family settlement area was located at *K'ai Hucila (Willow Point)*, on Cold Lake (see interviews Marie Cunningham nee Nest and Rosalie Andrew nee Marten in Hildebrandt and Thorpe 1993). This clan area was also a large multi-family harvesting area for fish and elk and included an ancestral burial ground. The earliest missionary contacts at Cold Lake also took place at this locale. In time, *Zanhi*'s family settlement area came to include a church and a cemetery. It was only with the establishment of the Le Goff Reserve and mission, and later Department of Indian Affairs activities and policies that clan families gravitated to the Le Goff settlement.

#### 4.1.11 Future Generations

The understanding that current generations are charged with the duty to take care of the land for future generations is a precept, widely held in common by Aboriginal peoples. Within Cold Lake First, community, family, and individual decisions are guided by the concern for future generations who inherit the Nation's traditional lands, for *the land* is the basis of culture, identity, language, and distinct forms of social organization and government. "The land is who we are."

"My husband and our children went hunting during the summer. We would camp out. We picked berries and bark, roots, and muskeg medicines. My sons experienced life out there; my grandchildren haven't because all the old roads and trails are blocked off...No one can say we never used the land north, east and west of Cold Lake. There are landmarks, stories, and histories of the land. No one can erase those. My people will always have a connection to the land that we are born on. Today as Elders and members of Cold Lake First, we sit and talk about our land. As Keepers of Dene Sulina Nenna, we continue to tell the stories of the past. And as Keepers of this [land] we know the stories are true. As Elders we have experienced the livelihood of the land. We will continue to tell our stories, our history and culture of this land, to our children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren" CLFN D5).

When the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range Settlement money was finally paid out for loss of livelihood, due to the forced removal from the greater part of *Denne Ni Nennè* (Section 4.3.2), some four decades after the fact,

the affected members of the Nation (now Elders) and leaders were very mindful of the needs of the children, current, and as yet unborn and the necessity for maintaining ancestral connections to the land. Strong efforts were made to secure a land base which would be able to support *Denesuline* customs, practices and traditions (see Section 4.3.4).

#### 4.1.12 Prophecies

Embedded within a *Denesuline* worldview is the power of *dreaming* and *knowing*. Such knowledge is passed on when the receiver is properly prepared to receive it. *Giftedness* is spoken about in relation to *medicine* and *dreaming*. *Gifted (strong)* individuals have the ability to dream powerful visions of the future that are honoured, and serve to guide the Nation.

*"I remember as a little child, they had a big feast. They started talking about way way back, and started relating those stories. I was sitting there, parked by that old man. He said, "I want him sitting beside me", even though other people wanted me to go elsewhere. He was telling us about into the future. Everybody was sliding down [to get away]. I wanted to slide down too. But when you are ordered to stay where you are, that's what you do" (CLFN D10).*

*"The old lady told my dad 'oh my grandson, we sit here, we don't hear anything: no cars, nothing; just birds...But years from now...it's going to be thundering out there.' She had said this to my dad. My dad said only after he grew up and after the old lady passed away, he was thinking about it. I guess what she meant were the jets just thundering up there; or the earth, just like the trains, the trucks. That's what she meant" (CLFN D20).*

#### 4.1.13 Language

Language, knowledge and cultural values are interconnected. The meaning in language does not simply come from the words; it comes from the structure of the language and the way words are assembled. As was recognized by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Government of Canada 1996b, Vol. 4), "Aboriginal languages embody cultural understandings of the relationship between things and of life as dynamic, in a state of flux, with cycles of birth, growth, death and renewal." Cold Lake First Nations members repeatedly confirm this inextricable relationship between the *Denesuline* language and *the land*.

In this regard, language is more than a means of communication. It is the means by which individuals understand themselves and the world. It is integral to the culture and identity of the people speaking it. As noted in Section 4.1.13, respect for the dynamic relationship between *the people* and *the land* is embedded throughout the language. Kinship relationships are similarly embedded (see also Section 4.1.10).

*"The language distinguishes all the kinship ties, the lineage from the father's side... [and] the mother's side" (CLFN D4).*

*"Like I have a lot of respect for my dad's brother and this is why no matter how old I am, he's still older. That's the respect that I tell the children today. I say even if you're born the same day, if one was born a minute after, the one that's born a minute after has to respect that one. On the same day! So there's your language 'Sawry' the older say 'Dese' younger, you see? And that's the respect we had. A lot of times we didn't know names of our grandmothers and our parent's names, because my dad never said the name. When I went to residential school, they asked me what was my mom's name, and I said "mom?" I didn't know her name. You see what I mean? There was that much respect" (CLFN D34).*

The extensive naming of places within *Denne Ni Nennè* (Section 4.1.6) is another manifestation of this relationship between *Denesuline* people and *the land*.

*"In our language, we always named everything. Whatever was on our land, our people made words for them. So anything that is in our Dene language, those animals all had to have names. So if there's a name for the buffalo... the animal [was] there" (CLFN D5).*

*Like even for us, like I said, there's a difference even for the kids that lived on this Reserve here [Le Goff] and the English Bay Reserve.... We knew all the domestic animals whereas maybe they didn't know. They didn't need those words" (CLFN 34).*

The concept of respect, as described in Section 4.1.2, is deeply embedded in the language itself.

#### **4.1.14 Medicine/Health**

The concept of medicine for *Denesutline* peoples is much broader than the direct use of medicinal plants. Rather the interdependent energetic relationships between plants and animals are where the medicine is situated (see also Section.4.1.1). The animals in the northern forests, in this regard, are recognized as possessing supernatural gifts to guide and assist the people in immeasurable ways. Locales with a lush and healthy abundance of vegetation and wildlife are the tangible evidence that spiritual energies are present.

The animals in the northern forests are recognized as possessing supernatural gifts to guide and assist the people in immeasurable ways (Coutu and Hoffman Mecredi 1999). There are many stories relating to animals and their power. Some are ancient tales relating the supernatural powers and connections between animals and the people, "*when the world was new*" (see Section 4.1.1). Others are more recent. Particular animals as well as parts of animals and plant foods are all recognized as having medicine power.

*"We had our own doctors, called the 'Medicine Woman.' She was a powerful and spiritual person. The people were powerful, because they didn't play with medicine, they used it the right way. They were strong.... spiritually, and powerful and very gifted. At one time, three children went under broken ice and the old lady rescued the two first, the third one, was under the ice for quite some time, and she grabbed him and pulled him out, saved all three kids, the old lady and that she was the medicine woman. A long time ago, women gathered, herbs, for medicine, for their own use, because there was no hospitals at that time. And nobody played with medicine because they were sacred... They had medicine for every kind of sickness. They also used some parts of animals - parts for medicine. Like the bear, they used gall and something else from muskrats" (CLFN C69).*

Individuals, recognized for their giftedness and knowledge of medicine powers serve the community as healers and seers. They, in turn, pass this sacred knowledge on to selected individuals who are recognized to have special abilities in these realms.

*"My uncle was dying and he gave me that medicine, before he died. So, before he died, our old man, he gave me the medicine. It heals cancer. If you have cancer and you have that juice, it's gone already. So it's good. But I don't give it to just anybody. My boy asked me for it but I never showed it to him yet... When I cured him [friend], I didn't even charge him a cent, I just cured him out of a favour. That's what the old man had told me. I don't worry too much about money. I treat each person like a friend. That's good enough. That's what I did, and I don't feel sorry about it. If I did good for somebody, I'm just happy about it....So I told him [friend]....'I'm getting old now, so you will be the king medicine man.' I gave him everything - all my rights....I gave it [the medicine knowledge] to him. I told him, 'You be the king man. I was the king man for you, I cured you, so now it's your turn. Be nice to the people. If somebody needs your help, then help them out'" (CLFN D36).*

The medicinal (health enhancing) properties of blueberries, cranberries, and whitefish have long been known to northern *Dene* peoples, including Cold Lake First for whom whitefish<sup>7</sup> is a preferred staple. "*Whitefish is a better fish for eating regularly*" (CLFN D4).

The general overall good health of *Denesutline* Elders who relied on a lifetime of eating food from *the land* is commonly noted; the *old people* died primarily of accidents and old age. Although life was hard, people were

---

<sup>7</sup> As noted early in the fur trade, whitefish is nutritionally rich and provides a well-balanced diet. "*Though it is a rich, fat fish, instead of producing satiety, it becomes daily more agreeable to the palate; and ... one may live wholly upon this fish for months, or even years without tiring*" (Richardson 1829 quoted in McCullough and Wilson 1982).



healthy. Despite, or perhaps because of, the physical demands of making a living on *the land*, Elders speak of times past as having been better for people mentally, physically and spiritually.

*“Long time ago people did not get sick. They used medicinal plants, like roots and the people knew their medicines for different sicknesses. All the herbs were used, because there was no hospital. [In] those days, people were not sick; no cancer was ever heard of in those days” (CLFN C18).*

*“It was common for people to be 90, 95. Some even as much as 100 years old. And then they lived on wild meat” (CLFN C35).*

## **4.2 The Land**

The concept of *the land* for *Dene* peoples, and Aboriginal peoples as a whole, includes much more than just the soil. It encompasses the sky, celestial bodies, the waters, the elements, and all living and non-living things, all of which are sentient and imbued with energy. *The land* is the place where the spiritual roots of a people reside. Language, spiritual values, and social customs all originate from, and are affirmed by, *the land*.

For *Dene* peoples who have long occupied the northern subarctic boreal forest *the land* has never been the unknown, unexplored wilderness or frontier as has generally been perceived by non-Aboriginal newcomers. It is *home*, with innumerable shared stories relating to the places, landscapes and features, events, burials, ceremonies and communal gatherings over countless generations (*time immemorial*). Through the recalling of events and stories of *the land*, the connections to the ancestors and a way of being are reaffirmed (see Battiste & Youngblood Henderson 2000; Coutu and Hoffman-Mecredi 1999; Cruikshank 2000).

### **Denne Ni Nennè**

The entirety of Cold Lake First Nations’ traditional territory is called *Denne Ni Nennè - Our Land*. These traditional lands extend northeast to La Loche and southeast to Paradise Hill in Saskatchewan; and west along the Sand River, south to Beaver Dam (Angling Lake) as far north as Winefred Lake (Figure 1.1).

*“So traditional lands that belonged to the Dene at that time, started from here, to Winefred Lake; that’s as far as I know the people roamed traditionally” (CLFN D1). “They went all the way to La Loche, all the way into Saskatchewan” (CLFN D2). “Suckerville was the southern Dene [peoples]’ capital. We would take the Beaver River down to the North Saskatchewan River. We stopped at Frenchman Butte, and the river kept going, and we finally arrived at Paradise Hill in Saskatchewan...” (CLFN D10).*

The Claim TLUO Map of *Denne Ni Nennè*, prepared by Cold Lake First Nations (see Section 3.2, Photo 1.1), encompasses a greater part of the lands traditionally occupied by the Nation’s families. *Ah ‘Tue (Primrose Lake)* is the heart of *Denne Ni Nennè*. *Suckerville*, on the west shore of the lake is the recognized centre, the place where extended families/clans gathered together and dispersed in seasonal cycles for countless generations.

*“All the lands south, north, west and east of Cold Lake were our home lands. We could hunt and fish anywhere. Primrose Lake was our winter home land” (CLFN D9).*

The mixed wood boreal forest terrain, within *Denne Ni Nennè* is a storied cultural landscape which includes well drained lands, rolling areas forested with spruce, birch, and aspen poplar, sandy and gravel ridges with jackpine cover, and extensive low muskeg areas. Numerous creeks, small lakes, sloughs, muskeg wetlands and natural springs are found throughout. Most of the lakes and rivers eventually discharge their waters into the Hudson Bay, via *Tsa Deze (Beaver River)*.

#### **4.2.1 Diversity and Abundance of Resources**

By virtue of its location within three watersheds [Beaver River, Clearwater River and Upper Churchill, (Natural Resources Canada (2008)], which encompass both boreal forests and the aspen parklands, *Denne Ni Nennè*

is a mosaic of ecological diversity. Historically, the interface between the boreal forest and parklands has afforded Cold Lake First Nations with access to an even greater diversity of resources than is present in either region (e.g., the ecotone<sup>8</sup> effect) (see Turner et. al. 2003).

In this regard, the forested areas are home to all kinds of different animals - moose, woodland caribou, buffalo, bear (black and grizzly), deer (whitetail and mule), wolves, lynx, wolverine, mink, fox, to name only a few. The lakes, streams, and wetlands support many different types of fish (e.g. whitefish, lake/river trout, pickerel/walleye, jackfish/pike, suckers) and shellfish as well as many other water creatures such as beaver, muskrat, otter and frogs.

The lakes and wetlands also provide habitat for numerous species of birds (migratory and endemic) including ducks, geese, swans, cranes (sandhill and whooping), and pelicans. Other birds within *Denne Ni Nennè* include eagles, owls, hawks, ravens, whiskeyjacks as well as a myriad of song birds, too numerous to mention.

The muskeg areas are the source of many powerful medicines used for healing and overall well-being. The sandy jackpine areas provide vast quantities of blueberries and cranberries. The wooded highlands and parklands have their own suite of medicinal plants and berries (e.g., raspberries, saskatoons, chokecherries).

Numerous general and specific accounts of the diversity and abundance to be found within *Denne Ni Nennè* have been relayed by members of Cold Lake First Nations members. Everything that *the people* needed to be totally self-sufficient and survive was readily available and in plentiful supply just as it was for all the other living things *belonging* to these lands.

As noted by Cold Lake First Nations members not all areas within *Denne Ni Nennè* are equally suited for human habitation since “*the animals congregated more in some places*” (CLFN D2). Those areas which were particularly suited are described as *living on the land places* (See Section 4.1.9).

## 4.2.2 Sacred Ecologies

The guiding metaphysical principle of *Denesuline* sacred ecology is that of respect, because “*we are all related*” (See Section 4.1.3). In accordance with this principle, it is understood that all entities of nature – plants, animals, stones, trees, hills, rivers, lakes and a host of other life/living forms - are embodied in reciprocal relationships that must be honoured. This relationship encompasses everything, from the spiritual to the physical, and includes technologies and tools that develop from a specific mode of thinking. The land nurtures humans and humans nurture the land in a reciprocal compact of care and responsibility (see Cajete 2000).

*“Everything there is important... everything has got a spirit. The Creator made everything in his own image even to the bugs. Everything. One without the other is no good; Grandma used to say that all the time. One without the other is no good. Everything works together.” (C10)*

It therefore follows that the habitats which support life are to be *respected* and *looked after* because of the interdependent energetic relationships which exist between plants and animals (including humans) and the *Maker (Creator/God)*. Vital to all life, water, wind, fire, and earth are primary *medicines* in this cosmological web of interconnected reciprocal relationships and is to be respected as such. Disregard for, mistreatment of, and disturbance to the natural order are acts which are disrespectful to the relationship and have consequences and are therefore to be avoided.

*Medicines* are found in locales, where birds, animals, and fish are found in abundance and good health. Accordingly, the foods coming from such locales are, in turn, what keeps human and non-humans healthy and strong. The specific habitats which support distinct species are recognized as being there for a reason and thus part of the sacred pact. Such areas are gently utilized by *Denesuline* families (see Section 4.1.2).

---

<sup>8</sup> An ecotone is a zone of transition between two different ecosystems.

*“Everything within Denne Ni Nennè is there for a reason – even the rocks” (CLFN D9). “Muskegs are special places. There’s a meaning for everything there” (CLFN D4).*

### 4.2.3 Living With The Seasons

Harvesting activities within *Denne Ni Nennè* have always been determined by the season and cyclical patterns of abundance. Everything takes place in its proper time and in the natural order.

*“In the summer you will enjoy your leaves and in winter you will enjoy your trees. The tree is waiting for the leaves. (CLFN D36).*

Ah *‘Tue (Primrose Lake)* and the surrounding area was the center of winter harvesting activities. In the early and late winter, small family units dispersed to their trapping areas. In the spring and summer, families convened in different locales south of Primrose Lake to take advantage of seasonal abundances (e.g., muskrats, ducks, spawning fish, and berries).

*“At this time of the year [September], people went berry picking and hunting up that way towards Marie Lake, Hin ‘tel ‘Tue, its called. And from there, a little further north, Bekka Nu Th’ah ‘Tue [May Lake]. People always lived there. Today [if] you go there; you can see people had lived there. There must be tent posts, fire pits still all over the place. I remember we use to go up there by horses and they use to cut hay in the slough for the horses” (CLFN C6).*

*“It should be called a ‘figure eight’, not a [seasonal] round. See on this map [Claim TLUO Map] people used to gather at Suckerville and Cold Lake, then head south to harvest plants and fish in the spring, summer and fall. Then they would come together again, before dispersing north to do their trapping and winter fishing at Primrose” (CLFN D12).*

*“Different times of the season, there’s different places that they used to fish. All along the whole shore line here [Cold Lake]; there’s different times of the year that they used to fish” (CLFN D15).*

The seasonal rounds for women and children were often different, depending on what livelihood activities the men were engaged in which took them away from families.

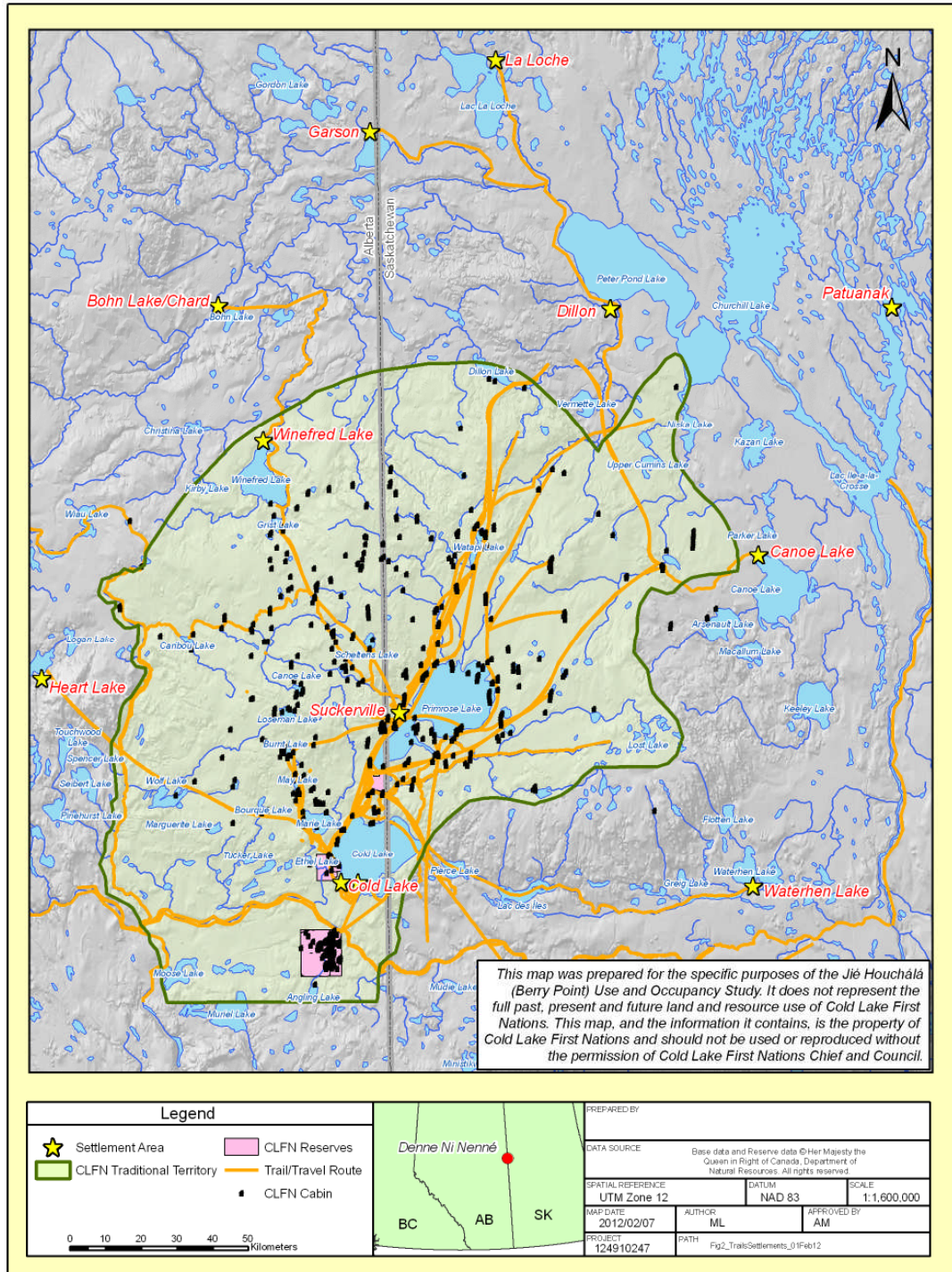
*“You see, even the women, they had their own places. Like we say, we go by the seasons....Amongst ourselves. And then the men, in the meantime were into their work. So, a lot of times the children and the mothers are left alone while our dads were out working” (CLFN D34).*

The long-standing (ancestral) seasonal harvesting (resource use) areas within *Denne Ni Nennè* were collectively mapped by Cold Lake First Nations’ Elders in the 1990s and recorded on the Claim TLUO Map (see Section 3.2, Photo 1.1). This specific information layer has been digitized and is presented in Figure 4.3.

### 4.2.4 Denesuline Land and Resource Management

Because the land and the people are inextricably inter-connected in a complex web of relationships, landscapes are uniquely defined by *Denesuline* in accordance with sacred teachings (*laws*), customs and traditions. In the preparation for the Primrose Lake Air Weapon Range claim process in the early 1990’s, the lands within *Denne Ni Nennè* were mapped according to land and resource management framework relevant to Cold Lake First *Denesuline* (see Section 4.2.4). In this land and resource management framework, the primary resource and the season of use are combined (see Figure 4.4.).

As is evident in Figure 4.4, winter and summer lands were clearly differentiated and the summer lands further defined, in general accordance with particular resources: Summer Moose hunting lands, All Season Big Game, Fish, Berries lands and All Summer Hunting Lands and Berries – Saskatoon lands. Prior to 1952, the combined *summer living on the land* area was very extensive.



**Figure 4.3 Information Digitized from Cold Lake First Nations' Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Wall Map**

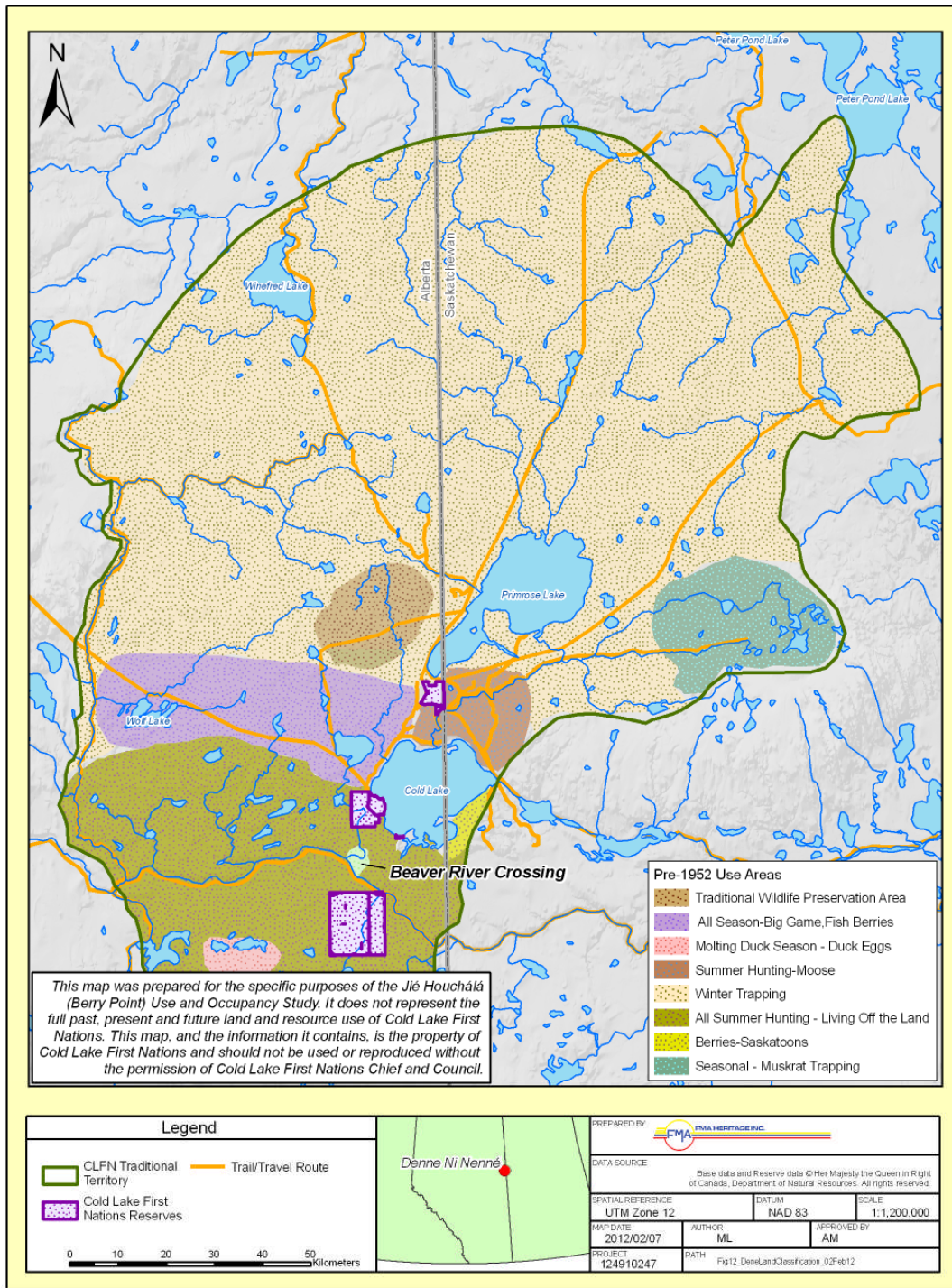


Figure 4.4 Cold Lake First Nations Denesuline Broad Land Use Zones

### Wildlife Preservation Area

*Tichanadei danat tenilyehi*, a Wildlife Preservation Area, was also part of the Cold Lake First *Denesuline* land and resource management (see Figure 4.4). *Tichanadei danat tenilyehi* is a core habitat area for large animals, such as moose and caribou, to rear their young. By common consent, no *Denesuline* would live in the Wildlife Preservation Area. All dwellings, with the exception of emergency shelters, were situated away from these locales. According to long-standing oral tradition, *Tichanadei danat tenilyehi* was the area where the animals were left alone to regenerate. In the spring, when the animals were calving or rearing their young, the area was avoided. Moose, deer, and caribou were only hunted if people were starving or travelling through the area (e.g., between *Łouwe Chok 'Tue (Cold Lake)* and *Hoba'i 'Tue (Burnt Lake)*, *Gagool 'An Heyay-l 'Tue (Loseman Lake)* and *Bekkeh tsi Haghan l 'Tue (Caribou Lake)* or further north (CLFN B10).

*"I was told that it was like a food bank; if you withdrew too much you deplete the interest. So, we just lived on the interest – we hunted the animals that moved out of there [Tichanadei danat tenilyehi]" (CLFN B55).*

*Denesuline* stewardship responsibilities and respectful use of the land includes an array of traditional resource management practices which allowed *the land and waters to rest* and the animals and plants to regenerate. As noted in Section 4.1.2 disturbance to *the land* contravenes *Denesuline* sacred law.

*"We travelled all over. We didn't over fish in one lake. That's why our people went, moving around, and spreading out where we caught our fish. That's how we preserved our fish" (CLFN D4).*

*"As soon as you step on a plant, they are gone. I don't know if you heard about what the farmers do; it's like summer fallow. You know how you have to use an area only this year, and then next year you plant over here and you let this one go. So that's how it is with berries, and then once other people are tramping all over it that's why our berries are going to go" (CLFN D34).*

### 4.2.1 Sacred Landscapes/Features

As described in Section 4.1.5, many ancient *Dene* stories, which have been orally passed on through countless generations, relate to the *'time of giants'*, when the land was populated by giant humans and animals, with no differentiation. The interactions between the giants (humans/animals) physically shaped the land. Many geomorphologic features with *Denne Ni Nennè* [i.e. lakes, streams (above and below ground), wetlands, muskegs and fens, spruce forests, aspen uplands, sandy jackpine ridges, hills, uplands, and grasslands] are the subject of ancient *Denesuline* stories (legends). There are many stories told about *Łouwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)* (see Section 4.1.6).

Sacred landscapes and features also include such things as springs, *grandfather rocks*, *grandfather forests/grandfather trees*, burial and birth places, and storied / named places.

The many springs around *Łouwe Chok Touwe/Cold Lake* and waters from springs are considered to be medicinal and therefore sacred. Numerous spring locations have been documented around *Łouwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)* (Figure 4.5).

*Grandfather Rocks* are large boulders (erratic) which carry messages through the generations of how to live right (FMA 2006 CNRL). They are spiritually significant landscape features. *Grandfather Rocks* preserve messages of how to *live right* for future generations. Such rocks are of spiritual significance and are found in various locations within *Denne Ni Nennè*.

*Grandfather Trees and Forests* are old/ancient trees and forests. As described in Section 4.2.2, they are sacred ecosystems. *Grandfather Trees*, like *Grandfather Rocks* can be intermediaries between *the people* and the *other world*.

Cold Lake First ancestral areas are very significant cultural heritage areas with evidence of long-term occupancy and use. Cold Lake First Nations claims ownership of all archaeological sites and artefacts within *Denne Ni Nennè*.

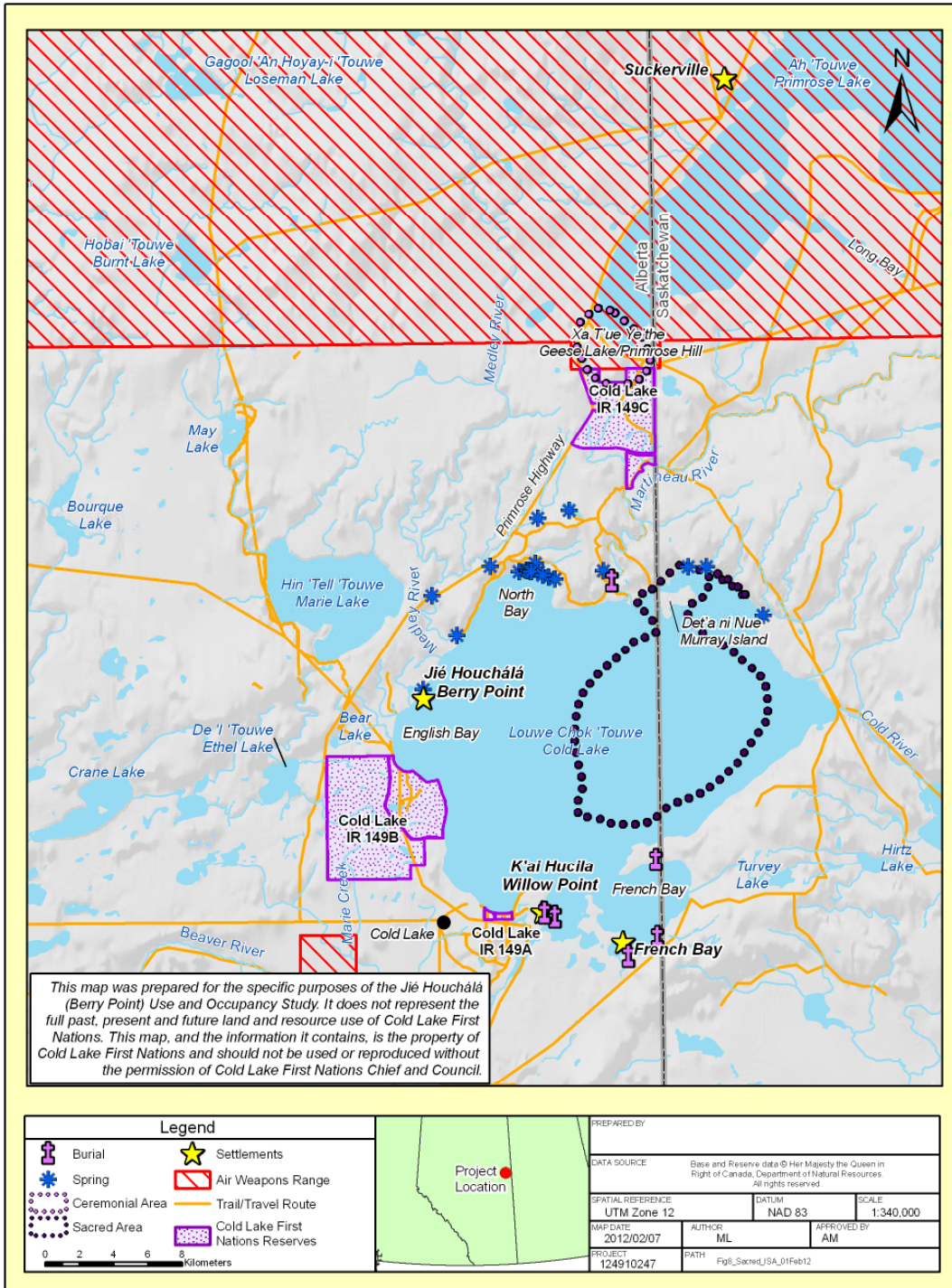


Figure 4.5 Previously Recorded Sacred Landscapes / Features

Burial and Birth places, by their very nature, relate to the *other world*. Untold numbers of births and burials have taken place within *Denne Ni Nennè* over the course of thousands of years, widely spread in time and space. Many birthplaces are recorded in family oral histories. The greatest majority of burials within *Denne Ni Nennè* are unmarked and have never been recorded. Besides being located along ancestral trails, burial and birth places are commonly located on ancestral encampments and ancestral family traplines. Cold Lake First has long stipulated that burials within *Denne Ni Nennè*, are not to be disturbed (disrespected).

#### 4.2.2 Named Places

The relationship between people and place is embedded in *Denesuline* place names. The extent of naming of places within *Denesuline* traditional territory perhaps most clearly illustrates the long-standing occupancy of *Denne Ni Nennè*. The depth of time and history embedded within named places and stories, in many instances, extends well beyond the living memory of the Nation. “*This land is the blood of our ancestors*” (CLFN B36).

Named geographical features embody the relationships between *the people, the land, and the other world*. Named places are not only physical markers on the landscape, they are “an inseparable aspect of a larger cohesive interrelated matrix of law, land, culture and livelihood” (Kulchyski 1998).

“*The land was integral to the people, the people were the land and the land was the people. They couldn’t separate the two. The names of the lakes, all the lakes and all the rivers are in Denesuline language and that just didn’t happen yesterday, that evolved over long time*” (CLFN C6).

“*The names of the land, our graves, our homes demonstrate that this was our homeland since time immemorial - even before time immemorial!*” (CLFN B35).

As described by Cold Lake First Elders and harvesters, named places are the addresses for orienting on the land and waters.

“*There were certain trees that you could use for landmarks, for places to set the nets. Like go so far out from a certain tree. Each place has certain landmarks*” (CLFN D4).

“*All the land around is named in Dene. If you wanted to know where someone lived, you were told the name of the place and you knew where to go. I never heard of anyone getting lost...All the landmarks between Cold Lake First and Winefred Lake were all named in Dene*” (CLFN D5).

The knowledge of specific lands is imprinted in the minds/hearts of the members of Cold Lake First who live/have lived on the land.

“*You can put me anyplace in this area with a blindfold; take that off and I’ll find my way back here. I know that country*” (CLFN D2).

#### 4.2.3 Trails and Travel Corridors

Within *Denne Ni Nennè* there is a vast and extensive network of trails and travel corridors connecting settlement areas, lakes, and harvesting areas used on a recurring seasonal basis (Figure 4.4). Accounts of great distances traveled on foot, with dog teams, or with horse drawn wagons along well-established trail networks en route to traplines, hunting and gathering areas or to visit extended family are commonly relayed, along with stories associated with the places along the route. The distances covered by *Dene ‘walkers’* are legendary.

“*We used to travel far those days....Sometimes we traveled by foot, sometimes by dog team, sometimes by horses*” (CLFN C68).

“*There was a trail to Chard [Chipewyan Prairie]. There were trails to La Loche. There’s even a trail to Dillon too. My grandma and grandpa said that the first year they got married they went to Dillon on the Beaver River.*”



*They came back with the dog team from Dillon to Cold Lake and they hit the Primrose. Chipewyan Prairie, that's all part of it, and Heart Lake. There was a trail between Cold Lake and Heart Lake, and there's a trail to Bohn Lake" (CLFN D15).*

The journeys were made along well-known summer and winter trails. The routes were mapped in the mind's eye and secured and confirmed by stories and descriptions of landforms and associated vegetation (see Section 4.2.2.1). This ancient trail network followed the water courses and natural landscape along high ground ridges.<sup>9</sup> Both waterways and summer and winter trails were used.

#### **4.2.3.1 Primrose Trail**

*Primrose Trail* is the main artery connecting Cold Lake First Denesuline to all parts of Denne Ni Nennè and beyond. In travelling to parts north, people had first to go to *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)* and from there take the high ground north, as further west there was too much muskeg. The high ground ridge runs around *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)* and *Łouwe Chok 'Tue (Cold Lake)*, north to *Bekkeh tsi Haghan I 'Tue (Caribou Lake)*, *Ou Ni Dahi Chok 'Tue (Winefred Lake)* and continues up to the junction of the Clearwater and Athabasca rivers (Fort McMurray) (CLFN-D14). This ridge generally follows the outline of the *Denesuline* traditional territory boundary, encircling the basin of low-lying muskeg centered within Cold Lake First traditional territory. From *Hoka (Suckerville)* on the west shore of *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)*, travelers went through *Tichanadei danat tenilyehi*, the Wildlife Preservation Area to reach winter homes on *Naghan L'Tue (Canoe Lake)*, *Hoba'i 'Tue (Burnt Lake)* and *Gagool 'An Heyay-I 'Tue (Loseman Lake)*. Trails ran alongside the west and east shores of *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)* and were connected to *Łouwe Chok 'Tue (Cold Lake)*, *Ou Ni Dahi Chok 'Tue (Winefred Lake)* and Cowper Lake in the north.

Travel from the summer settlements in Cold Lake to the winter settlements occurred in the fall, with travel back south to the spring and summer *living on the land places (Awne)*.

*"...in the springtime, well people used to leave and go back to their...homes to the south and they had to leave before the ice went away...like early March, they used roads and river for their highways and there are roads, permanent roads that used to be, but to be shorter cuts they used the lakes mostly" (CLFN C7).*

A typical fall trip is described as follows: *"Leaving Cold Lake you travelled through Marie Lake on a wagon, wagon trails or sleigh or toboggans or however we travelled. As a child I remember going with my grandparents, my parents. There was one cargo wagon full of groceries and clothing and whatnot and the other one would be a hay rack. I remember sitting in a hay rack full of hay where there was a hole in the middle for me and my mother to sit in with a bunch of blankets. There used to be about three or four families going together, going north. Such as late October, as soon as there was snow, to travel with sleigh, because that's how we travelled" (CLFN C7).*

Travel time between *Łouwe Chok 'Tue (Cold Lake)* to *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)* on *Primrose Trail* was a two or three day ride on horseback, and three or four days to Watapi Lake. After coming out of the bush in the spring, some trappers traveled as far as Regina by ox cart to trade their furs for supplies where they received a better return than at the trading posts in the Cold Lake region.

*Denesuline* travel patterns have not been static. Cold Lake First harvesters have long taken advantage of the opportunities that presented themselves to decrease travel time to desired locales. In the early part of the century, railway and baseline survey cut lines provided more direct access and came into extensive use. In later years, airplanes and 'bombardiers were used to go back and forth from Cold Lake to winter settlements. By the 1970s, with the advent of a variety of motorized transport, travel time was immensely shortened so that activities could be carried out from the Le Goff and English Bay settlements with relative ease.

---

<sup>9</sup> Use of these ancient travel corridors allowed the early fur traders with their Aboriginal guides to penetrate deep into the fur rich interior of what is now western and northern Canada, via the Athabasca, North Saskatchewan and Beaver rivers.

*"[At Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)]...later on in the years, there was this guy, a pilot, that used to pick up some trappers. Land on the lake, any place as long as the plane used to go around, to each place where people lived, all over the lake and if he spotted a red blanket out at the lake, that meant that the plane has to stop, land there, and pick them up, come back the next day with groceries. Though there was just one place operating out of Cold Lake, that they served people around here and later on there was a Bombardier that came, I don't know what kind of vehicle it was but it was fast. I used to be scared of it because it travelled so fast" (CLFN C7).*

The major rivers and trails facilitated extensive travel throughout the entirety of *Denne Ni Nennè*, connecting Cold Lake First Nations' settlements and camp.

Primrose Trail is also particularly significant because it is associated with Cold Lake First Nations family histories and stories specific to epidemics. Furthermore, according to Cold Lake First Nations collective oral history, there are a multitude of burials and death places along the trail. The majority of these are not recorded.

#### **4.2.3.2 Settlements and Camps**

As noted earlier (Section 4.2.1) (Figure 6), there are a many of settlements within the vast lands of *Denendeh* where the various *Dene* Nations gathered annually during the summer to celebrate, play games, relax or confer about matters of political importance.

*"That's the way I remember some of the tribal conventions that took place" (CLFN D10).*

These ancient settlement areas are characteristically situated near fishing lakes with an abundance of animals and berries nearby. *Dene gatherings* within the vast lands of *Denendeh* continue to be an annual affair which Cold Lake First Nations' families regularly host and/or attend. The traditions of summit (political) meetings and hand games, drumming, and wagering continue.

Within *Denne Ni Nennè*, the numerous clan/multi-family settlements were identified in preparation for the CLAWR Claim Hearings. In addition to Suckerville, on *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)*, village settlements include *K'ai Hucila (Willow Point)*, French Bay, and English Bay on *Louwe Chok 'Tue (Cold Lake)*; *Hoba'i 'Tue (Burnt Lake)*, and *Gagool 'An Heyay-l 'Tue (Loseman Lake)* (Figure 5). The importance of Beaver River Crossing was also noted (Figure 6). As resources permit, these settlements and gathering places (camps) are being documented in more detail by the Nation's Traditional Land Use and Occupancy office. Such documentation is a critical foundational component of heritage retention planning and cultural/language revitalization because concomitant with the destruction of sites/locales and restricted access is the rapid erosion of the knowledge and stories of places (see Section 6.2.1). Graves and burial grounds are commonly associated with settlement areas.

*"French Bay used to be like a seasonal village. People used to dry fish there and hunt. People used it in the fall and spring. They'd hunt there too, while they were drying the fish. They'd stay until the fish were done spawning" (CLFN D1).*

*"In early fall, around mid-September people would disperse to their winter settlements such as Suckerville, Hoba'i 'Tue [Burnt Lake], and Gagool 'An Heyay-l 'Tue [Loseman Lake] which were typically occupied during the cold months of the year, although some people stayed year-round" (CLFN C18).*

From these settlements, smaller groups of trappers and hunters, usually referred to as *partners*, would head out in the fall and winter to work their traplines and hunting areas. The furs and game procured from the dispersed winter hunting encampments would be processed and stored at winter settlements. Often, there would be a winter trip back to *Louwe Chok 'Tue (Cold Lake)* for Christmas (CLFN C66 and CLFN C18). *"When people came back for Christmas, I think was really the happiest time....New Years, people would make a big feast" (testimony, Indian Claims Commission 1994).*

*“Different families would hold the feast for the community, followed by a dance (CLFN B51). “For two weeks [at Christmas] each family that could afford it would hold a feast, and there would be dances and storytelling. Maybe some young guy just made his first kill, so the Elders would sit with him and wish him well” (CLFN B36).*

In addition to the above-noted larger settlements, there are numerous long standing seasonal multi-family resource gathering camps located throughout *Denne Ni Nennè*. Those camps of relevance to the current study are reported on in Section 5.1.3.

In keeping with *Denesuline* principles of sharing and reciprocity (Sections 4.1.4, 4.1.2), use of *the land* within *Denne Ni Nennè* includes shared use with Algonquian boreal forest dwellers and buffalo hunting peoples of the northern parklands (e.g., Woodland Cree, Plains Cree, Saulteaux). As a result of this contact, Cold Lake First Nations shares many extended family connections with other Aboriginal peoples from surrounding regions and with Métis peoples whose origins trace back to the arrival of fur traders. In this regard, the shores of Cold Lake at North Bay and Martineau River have included common harvesting use by Métis, and Saulteaux peoples.

### **4.3 Selected Historical Notes**

Some selected historical notes relevant to Cold Lake First Nations’ history/relationships with non-aboriginal Canadians is presented in the following:

#### **4.3.1 Treaty 6**

Cold Lake First Nations was the only *Dene* nation to sign Treaty 6. As a forest people, the *Denesuline* were not faced with the starvation and destitution of the buffalo hunting Nations since *Ah’ Tue (Primrose Lake)* to the north of Treaty 6 lands “was the focal point in the traditional life and economy” (ICC 1994; Appendix A). Chief *Uldai* (Jackfish; *Kinoosayoo* in the Cree language) signed Treaty 6 on behalf of Cold Lake First Nations at Fort Pitt on September 9, 1876. As with other Treaty 6 Nations, Cold Lake First Nations members share an understanding that the treaty was a sacred contract to share the land and that First Nations peoples would be able to live as before.

#### **4.3.2 Cold Lake Air Weapons Range**

Following World War II, strategic air power took on heightened significance in Canada as part of Canada’s post-war Cold War commitments to military allies and requirements for more training. In the exploration for training space, the Department of National Defence looked toward remote regions where the civilian populace would not be endangered. By early 1951, the Department of National Defence had secretly evaluated several locations and identified an expanse of “*unoccupied*” Crown land centred on Primrose Lake and straddling the provincial border of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The provincial governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan both quickly agreed to a 20 year lease, recognizing that an air weapons range would affect natural resource exploitation, commercial fishing and an estimated 75 traplines (Lackenbauer 2007). In April 1951, the Minister of Defence informed the House of Commons that a planned 4490 square mile bombing and gunnery range in the Primrose Lake area would be created (Figure 11). The affected First Nations learned about the creation of the weapons testing area through a media press release. Immediate steps were taken to protect treaty rights. Although no Indian Reserves were located within range boundaries, important harvesting lands were. The Indian Association of Alberta and the commercial fishing industry were vociferously opposed to the plan

(Lackenbauer 2007). Very little advance notice of the impending removal was given to the people (First Nation, Métis, Caucasian) who would be displaced.

Provincial agreements with First Nation and Métis trappers and fishermen with interests in the affected area took years to settle. The impact on Cold Lake First and Canoe Lake Cree First Nation, two of the five First Nations affected, were particularly severe, since the range eliminated the territory from which their self-sufficient livelihood had been derived for centuries.

According to the testimony of *Denesuline* Elders, at the time of removal from Primrose Lake in 1954, there was a measure of consolation about the forced relocation since it was understood that their land would be returned to them after the expiry of the 20 year lease. This understanding was so clear that people even left their possessions in the homes they were abandoning (CLFN B64).

The implications for Cold Lake First were such that “their most productive lands were absorbed in the 4490 square miles taken up by the range. Band members were excluded from the whole of the range lands. This amounted to an expulsion that was devastating...they lost, or were severed from, the entirety of their traditional lands in the northern forest....They were deprived of the best of their traditional lands, and therefore, their livelihood” and subsequently “descended into a cycle of desperation and poverty” (Indian Claims Commission 1994). A total of 277 Cold Lake band members were displaced from the range or affected by overcrowding from those who were excluded while 223 were otherwise affected, for a total of 500, which is close to the actual population of Cold Lake First at that time (see Indian Claims Commission 1994, Appendix A).

In 1951, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, responsible for Indian Affairs, was already aware that displaced Cold Lake First Nations members would have little chance of finding other trapping areas, because the areas immediately adjacent to the air weapons range were overcrowded, with few new lines available. As a result, it was concluded that it would be necessary to provide displaced Cold Lake First Nations members with a new vocation (likely agriculture) (Indian Claims Commission 1994; Appendix A). However, as noted in, agricultural lands in the Cold Lake region were already taken up by settlers.

When the original 20 year lease term was up, rather than returning the lands to Cold Lake First, as had been understood, the provincial and federal governments renewed the CLAWR lease for another term. The leased land base was also increased.

*“The original bombing range was different....Because at one time the bombing range was just from Saskatchewan, it was just a strip across, like that....But then it went wider....It’s in the archives, where the bombing range was at first....There was a long strip that was just north of us, and it was one area where they actually use [it for] a bombing range. And then after they re-did the boundaries of the bombing range....after they renewed the lease for another twenty years, somehow it got bigger.” (CLFN D12)*

After fifty years of effort on the part of Cold Lake First the claim was investigated and subsequently awarded compensation for loss of livelihood, based on the principle of a “*livelihood for a livelihood*.” The circumstances surrounding the creation of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range were perceived to be so unjust that the first inquiry which the Indian Claims Commission, created in 1991, processed was the Cold Lake First and Canoe Lake Cree Nation Claim. Although the claim technically did not fall within the mandate of the Commission, it was recommended for resolution (Indian Claims Commission 1994; Appendix A).

The Indian Claims Commission concluded that although Canada had the right to take up land under the treaties from time to time, it had breached treaty obligations to respective First Nations by taking up such a

large tract of land and so abruptly decimating the economies of the Cold Lake First and Canoe Lake Cree Nation peoples, destroying their ways of life and abandoned plans for economic rehabilitation.

In March 1995, the Department of Indian Affairs and the Department of National Defence announced that they would deal with the Cold Lake First and Canoe Lake Cree First Nation grievances as special cases, due to the unusually severe impacts to both Nations. A final settlement was reached in 2002.

Cold Lake First Nations' traditional lands taken up by the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range are depicted in Figure 4.6.

While the 1995 CLAWR Final Settlement gave Cold Lake First controlled access to the range, members report that there are many restrictions which affect members' abilities to engage in customary activities.

*"You have to put all the kid's name on those lists. You are allowed to send a guest in there too, but his name has got to be on the list....They show you a little bill that shows you what a plane looks like, and a bomb. And you're not supposed to feed the bears. And then they let you in....For the ones who have been going before, they don't have to do the safety each time.... And when you want to get an orientation for the new ones, there's never anybody around. Every Thursday it's got to be handed in, otherwise you don't get to go on the range.... If they have some kind of a thing going on up there, then we can't get in. They tell us, 'No, it's closed.... So what I do, I've got the number for the south gate and I phone to see if the coast is clear. If they say, 'Yes, the coast is clear', then I go ahead and go in. Otherwise it's a long way to drive and get turned away" (CLFN D14).*

*"And what times you can go....It's all on military time, and it's for their convenience" (CLFN D12).*

### **4.3.3 Hydrocarbon Developments**

Oil and gas exploration is noted by Cold Lake First Nations members as starting in the 1950s. In the mid-1960s pilot heavy oil recovery operations were launched in the Cold Lake region. In 1985 commercial production was underway.

*"Oil companies started moving in [in the 1980s], more so than before. They were there before, on the Reserve in the late 50s and early 60s. They started surveying all around us. That was when the changes started; we were not allowed to go to certain areas....The oil companies on the land around here are taking over all of our areas. There are oil wells all over the south and they still want more" (CLFN D5).*

*"See, it's like I was telling you. They took away the bombing range, and then we were limited only to those small areas. And now oil companies are moving in there and taking [the rest]" (CLFN D1).*

Numerous oil sands projects are currently in operation or proposed within *Denne Ni Nennè* on the Alberta side (Figure 4.7).

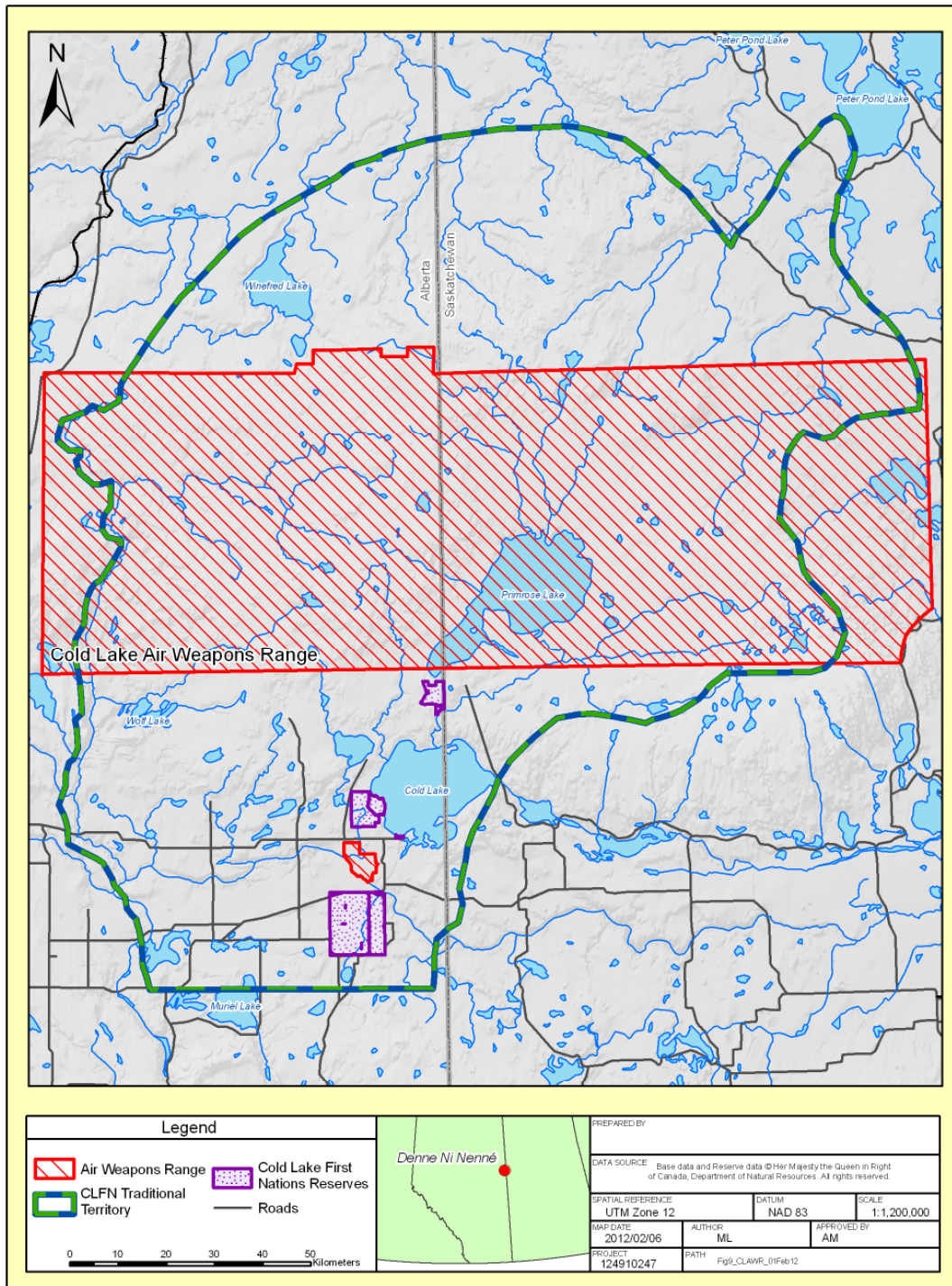
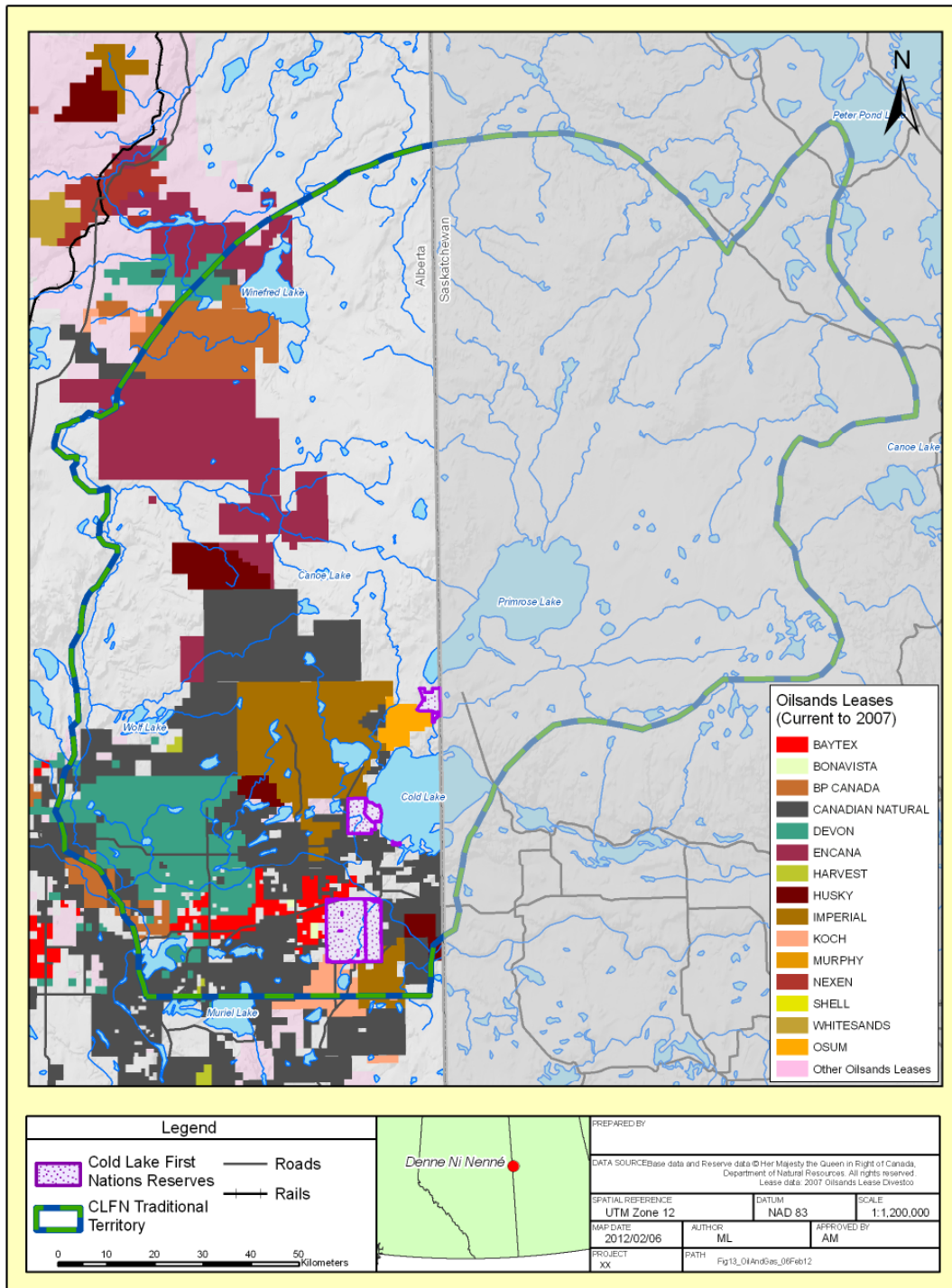


Figure 4.6 Cold Lake Air Weapons Range in Relation to *Denne Ni Nenné*



**Figure 4.7 Oil Sands Leases in Relation to *Denne Ni Nennè* (Note: Oil Sands Lease Data Not Accessed for Saskatchewan)**

*"First it was the gas stuff in here, and that pipeline. And that kind of limited our access to Wolf Lake and that area. And then, what was CNR before, what was that company? Rio Alto was the company before, and CNRL bought them. And that forest company. So they started all their gas and everything in that way. And then Imperial Oil came in, and they were in a small area. And people used to hunt, even in and around their pipelines, in there. And then Canadian Natural started - another SAGD, they started SAGD, Imperial went from pump jacks to cyclical [steam stimulation/ CSS] to, I don't know what it is now" (CLFN D12).*

Many of the early oil and gas extraction facilities within *Denne Ni Nennè* are reported to have been abandoned and are unreclaimed.'

*"There's a big time lapse in reclamation. Right now, in Canada, there's over one thousand leases that have never been reclaimed....Remember the Norcen plant there. I walked in there. There used to be a cement pit and the cement was just left there....It was supposed to be reclaimed. They never reclaimed nothing! Norcen's plant is the plant site on Osum's lease area. It's already disturbed. They didn't do any clean up there. We were riding a quad out there. We were just out there and saw that. Norcen moved out of there about 20 years ago" (CLFN D1). "They [Norcen] did plant trees there. Some are 8 to 10 feet now. The trees that were planted are very few. I can count them, that's how few" (CLFN D2).*

*"In fact there's a well over here in the corner of our Reserve. And that's the one that you hear once in a while, with a hissing sound" (CLFN D2). "And nobody else has come in to clean it up" (CLFN D14).*

There are concerns about the environmental burden that may be borne by the Nation *'after the oil is done.'*

#### **4.3.4 Parks and Tourism**

Beginning in the early 1950s, the creation of parks within *Denne Ni Nennè*, specifically in the Cold Lake region, has been an ongoing source of concern and contention for the Nation. As would be expected, parks have been created in prime locations for human use and superimposed on *Denesuline* ancestral settlement and harvesting areas. In the Cold Lake region these same locations are long-standing (ancestral) traditional use areas. In the creation of provincial parks, Cold Lake First families have been displaced from many ancestral settlements, burial grounds, and harvesting camps, and customary activities, harvesting or otherwise, have been prohibited, discouraged, or now have costs imposed. The ancestral trails around Cold Lake which provided access to these ancestral settlements and harvesting areas have also been unilaterally blocked off.

*"See we used to be able to fish, too, all along the whole place [Cold Lake]. And now you can't even get in there.....We haven't got any access to the lake [because of the parks]" (CLFN D4).*

*"...what we were saying is that also along the lake here there used to be the wagon trail, right in here. That's [Sandy Beach] where they [Parks] cut it off. They made a white man's beach where it belonged to us, where the saskatoons used to grow really good. But once they started having all those parties and everything they killed all that" (CLFN 34).*

Cold Lake Provincial Park was established at *K'ai Hucila (Willow Point)*, an ancestral settlement and a multifamily seasonal harvesting area and burial ground, long occupied by the Nation's forefathers and mothers (see Sections 4.3.4).

*"Before Treaty was signed, Uldai just lived there [Willow Point]..... Uldai is buried there, along with some others. There's about 3 or 4 graves there. They found graves when there was digging going on there, and they are now recorded and protected in some way....We came to visit in the 80s; the last year, when they*



*designated it as a park. [Elder's name] was really angry because they told her she had to pay to stay there. She said, 'I came here for years, drying fish, and we always came here.'...There used to be an old road there too, but they put barricades on that....Willow Point is all park, bordering the Cold Lake Reserve. Willow Point came first, and then the park kept getting bigger. French Bay and Willow Point are all park land now" (CLFN D4).*

*"...Willow Point became a park. You couldn't stay there, after that time. Before the 1970s, people would stay there for fishing in the spring and the fall... You can fish [at Willow Park], but it's a tourist camp and there's a ski hill. There's no area set aside for us at all, and we'd have to pay" (CLFN D1). "People still fish there, but there are no designated areas [for Cold Lake First]" (CLFN D11).*

Customary access and activities have been denied to Cold Lake First Nations *Denesuline* in relation to the park at French Bay.

*"French Bay used to be like a seasonal village. People used to dry fish there and hunt. People used it in the fall and spring. They'd hunt there too, while they were drying the fish. They'd stay until the fish were done spawning" (CLFN D1).*

The creation of new provincial parklands, Park 2000, in the early 1990s when new Cold Lake First Nations' reserve lands were to be selected as a result of the 1995 CLAWR Claims Settlement (see Section 4.3.3.8) is a particularly contentious matter. Cold Lake First Nations' negotiators report that their efforts to secure new reserve lands on the shores of Cold Lake were inevitably thwarted by the provincial government.

*"... these things going on around Cold Lake area with Parks - whenever they find out that the Nation is into getting land to live off of, they made parks out of it.... When we were looking for land around the lake, they made parks out of it. So we got kicked out of each of those areas that we had been using before...." (CLFN D1).*

The creation of Park 2000 at North Bay (Cold Lake) is still unresolved for Cold Lake First Nations members because these were lands which the Nation specifically requested in the 1995 CLAWR Claim settlement (see Section 6.2.3.3).

The extent of park developments within and in proximity to *Denne Ni Nennè* is shown in Figure 4.8.

### **4.3.5 Cumulative Encroachments**

When all the encroachments within *Denne Ni Nennè*, Cold Lake First Nations' traditional lands, agriculture, hydro carbon developments and parks, are taken into account, little remains for the Nation's members to exercise their constitutionally protected rights (Figure 4.9).

*"Everywhere we go its development. Everything on North Bay is development, like Red Fox estates. There's housing on the other side of the reservation....On Horseshoe Bay they are building so much...French Bay, there's things going on there too, and all along that road going to Cold Lake....that's where the ski hill is" (CLFN D4).*

*"We were so free....Now we are prisoners in our own land...now when you pitch a tent you are told to get off someone's property....We lived free for a long time, and now we have been put in a cage" (CLFN B46).*

*"We used to hunt in that area where it's a grazing lease now. That was done about 20 years ago. They never talked to us about it. The Nation's cattle can't go on there. It's grazing land for all the other people in the area" (CLFN D1).*

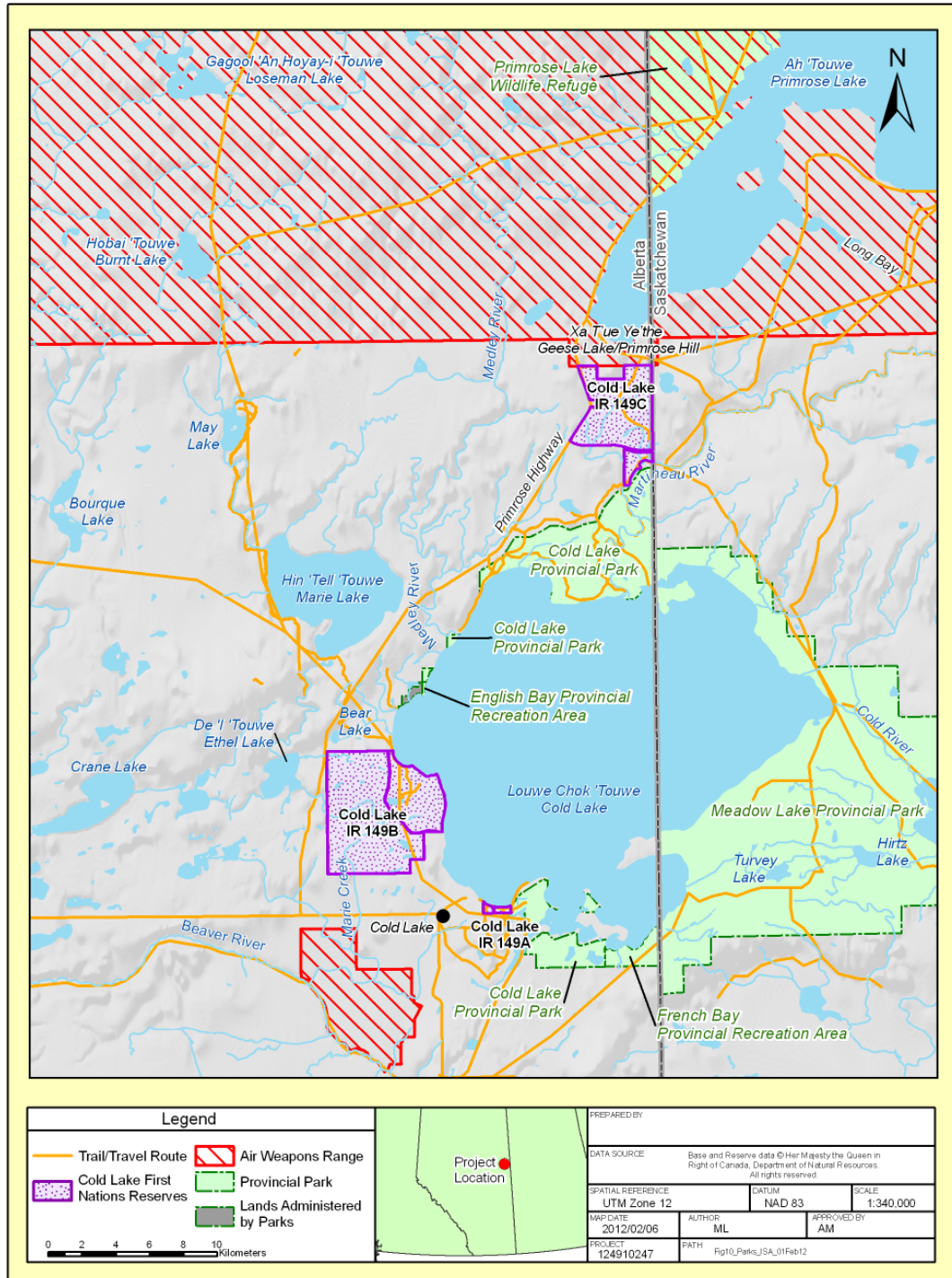


Figure 4.8 Provincial Parks around Louwe Chok 'Touwe (Cold Lake)

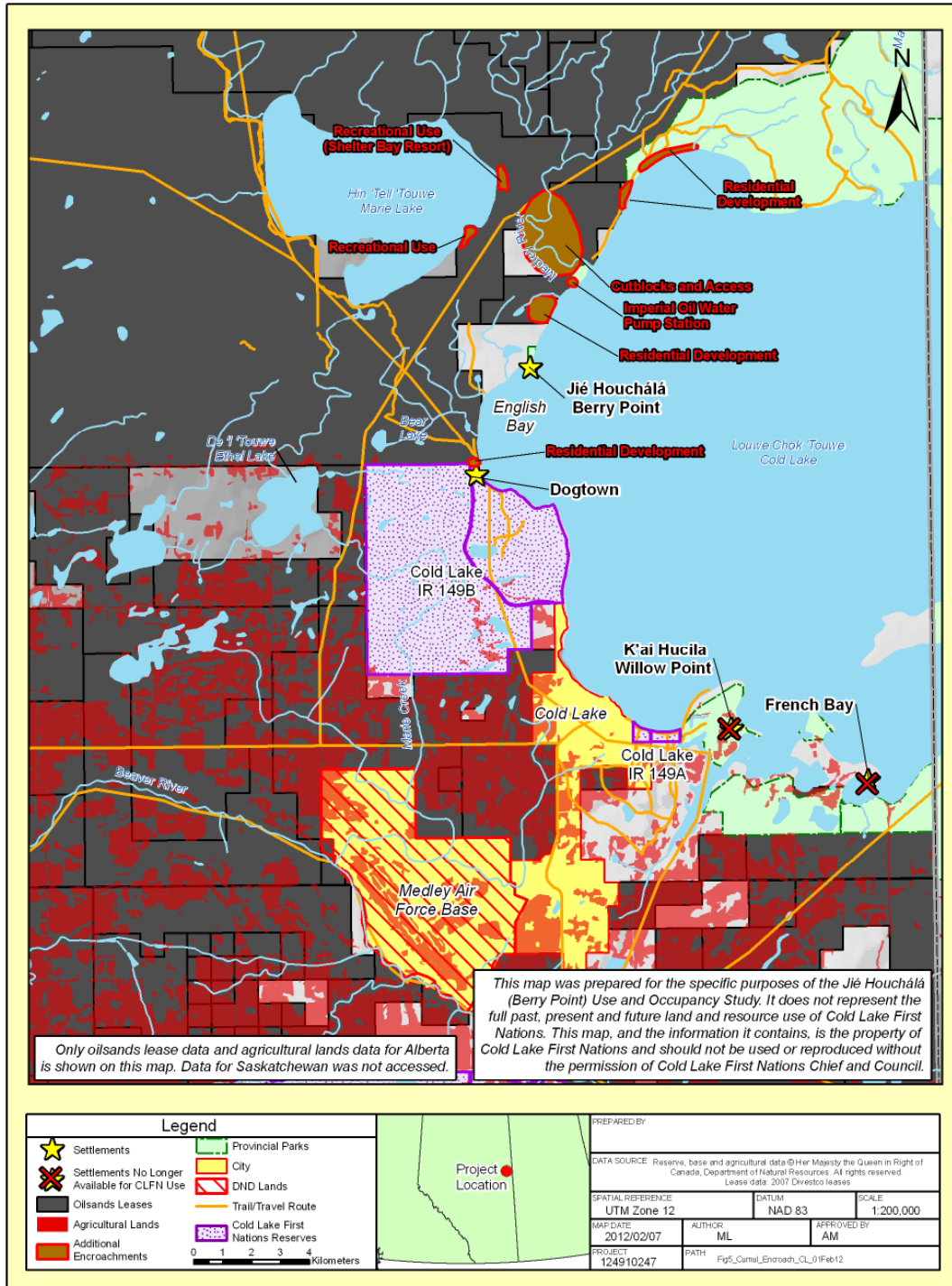


Figure 4.10 Cumulative Encroachments

## **5      *JÍÉ*                      *HOUCHÁLÁ/BERRY*                      *POINT*** **TRADITIONAL USE AND OCCUPANCY**

The following section of this report presents information about Cold Lake First Nations occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. This information was provided by members of the Nation specifically interviewed for this study in response to the construction and expansion at English Bay Provincial Recreation Area. In addition to the information on occupancy and use, information has also been included about the activities and the relationships that are involved in, and integral to, the meaningful practice and experience of this use for Cold Lake First Nations members. The presentation of information that has been gathered is organized as follows.

Section 5.1 **Connection to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*** brings forward Cold Lake First Nations members' memories and lived experiences in relation to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* as an explanatory backdrop for matters which are expanded upon in the subsections of the report which follow.

Section 5.2 ***Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Spatial Extent** describes the full extent of the area that is thought as, and referred to, by Cold Lake First Nations as *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

Section 5.3 ***Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* as a 'Living on the Land Gathering Place'**, introduces the concept of a *Denesuline living on the land gathering place* which is integral to understanding the importance of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* to Cold Lake First Nations. The area referred to by Cold Lake First Nations members as *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, which was the focus of the traditional occupancy and use investigations, is broadly defined accordingly.

Section 5.4 **Occupancy Areas, Activities, and Relationships** provides specific information about *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* in relation to Cold Lake First Nations' occupancy (past and present) of the area, including its history as a long-standing (ancestral) and continuously occupied *Denesuline* seasonal settlement and camp area and its association with *Primrose Trail*, burials, named places, and landmarks.

Section 5.5 **Harvesting Activities, Locales and Relationships** provides specific information about *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* regarding a wide range of harvesting uses (past and present), including fishing, hunting, berry picking, medicinal plant gathering, and other vegetal gathering in conjunction with values, customs, beliefs and traditions which are inextricably interconnected elements of *Denesuline* harvesting activities, heritage, identity and well-being.

Section 5.6 **The Unique Nature of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*** speaks to the tangible and intangible values that, together, result in an area that is unique and especially valuable for Cold Lake First Nations use and occupancy.

Section 5.7 **Summary** brings together information from the preceding section to present a final overview of Cold Lake First Nations traditional use and occupancy of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

## 5.1 Connection to Jié Houchálá/Berry Point

A selection of statements made by members of Cold Lake First Nations speaking about their relationships with *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is presented below to set the tone for later sections, which provide additional detail about the relationship between Cold Lake First Nations and *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

*“...the people, my grandparents – my maternal grandparents always lived at Berry Point. They lived there all along the lake starting from English Bay where the Indian Reserve is; all along the lake there. Everywhere, right to Primrose Lake, the Native people have lived there. We the Denesuline built the roads so thot’ine didn’t make those roads. Denesuline made those roads; they used dog teams to begin with and then they used horses. That’s how they travelled. That’s how we travelled. Berry Point was a place of gathering in the spring and in the fall - in the spring when they were coming back from Primrose Lake; in the fall when they were going back to Primrose Lake. That’s where they dried their fish, they dried their meats; they were hunting there and picking their berries. They also dried the berries. They had baskets they made from birch bark and they carried their berries in there.*

*I remember that because I was with my grandparents. My grandparents lived there and I was a kid at that time. I remember very clearly. We lived in a tent and believe me, at that time, the snow was high, not just knee deep. It was up to here [indicating height]. But we lived there and then we did all our fishing and hunting and then we would move to Primrose Lake where we had cabins. Some of us had cabins; some of us lived in tents; whatever we lived in. And then the land was always used for purposes; we did not spend over what we needed. If we were fishing we took enough fish, we took enough meat. We did not over-hunt or over-fish. And like they say, the land was always used for the above purposes: hunting fishing and picking berries and all that stuff I just told you. They would freeze meat in the moss, like a cache underground. They froze their meats – by that time it was cold and the meat stayed frozen, and they would carry that to Primrose.” (C8).*

\*\*\*\*\*

*“I’ve been raised in English Bay all my life.... I’ve always been with my grandparents and a whole bunch of other people. We lived at Berry Point, camped out there. They did the fishing, we picked berries; the old folks, they kept us going. They tell us to do things, to watch. They were our teachers. They told us to get birch bark in the early spring. They pick roots; they pick rotten trees that fell to get the rotten wood to smoke the hides. We picked blueberries, saskatoons along the lake, raspberries, cranberries, gooseberries... They snared rabbits and they went hunting. And the old ladies they tell us to sit beside them and learn how to make dry meat and how to cure the meats, ...the fish - the same thing. They dried the fish. They smoked up the fish.*

*They used to have caches down below, behind the [English Bay] Park right now; that is where they used to put their meats in the summer time.... They dug holes in the ground; there is always ice underneath the mosses which kept the meats all cold.... in the mossy muskeg area. You could identify, because everybody had their own cache area.*

*But nobody touched one another's stuff. Everybody respected one another's gathering, foods and all that. They all shared.*

*As a child at that time, there were a whole bunch of kids running around. Summertime it was swimming, playing around big trees, playing hide and go seek....Besides that they picked medicines, roots of different kinds of medicines. South of where the [English Bay] Park is where we picked pitcher plants with my grandmother." (C16)*

\*\*\*\*\*

*"My family, my grandparents, my ancestors, my parents, myself, my relatives have travelled this road all our lives and have used the land ever since I can remember. There was no restrictions to the land. We could go anywhere; there was no barriers of any kind. We could hunt and trap. My people were very self-sufficient so that's why we were able to use the land to live off, with the animals and the waters. We've always been on this land....my husband and I and my children. We used especially the area at Berry Point. Right here - that's where we used to camp." (C7)*

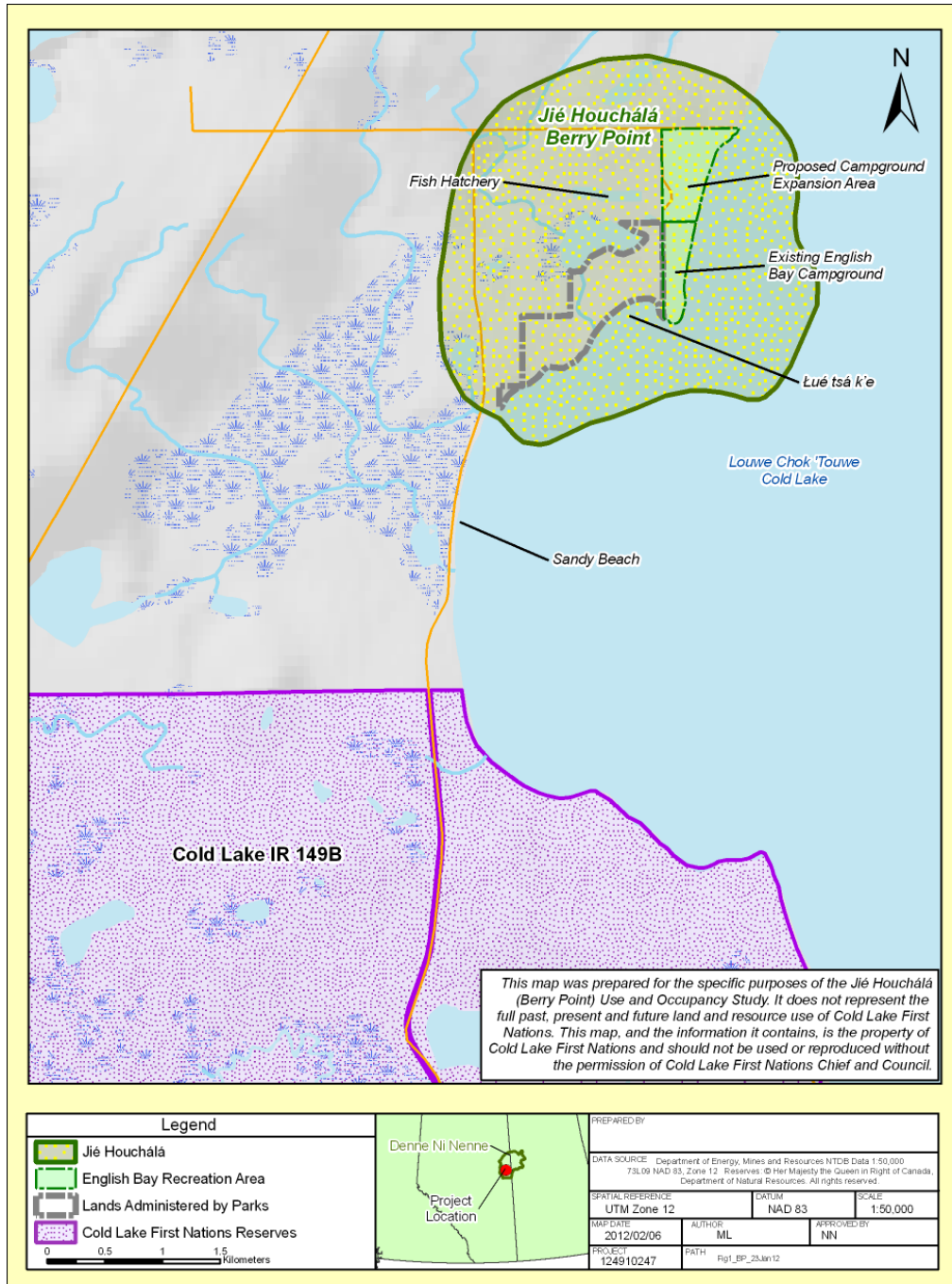
\*\*\*\*\*

*"I use the [Berry Point] lands for camping, fishing, smoking fish, picking berries, hunting. So we hunt rabbits and chickens, pick medicines, hunt ducks, and we use the area for fishing different areas year around. So there's areas nearby that are shallow and deep water, and there's areas where there's deep water near shore, which is also very useful for us. And then we have our moose hunting grounds attached to there. Moose hunting, [this is a] very good moose hunting area, which is very important to us, and also deer. I do a lot of snaring in the area, of rabbits and also muskrats." (C17)*

## **5.2 *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Spatial Extent**

Based on the occupancy and use information provided by Cold Lake First Nations members and mapped in the course of the investigations, the spatial extent of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is considerably larger than the point of land from which the place name is derived. According to the descriptions provided by study participants, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* extends north of the point of land along the west shore of *Łouwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)* to encompass traditional fish camps; south of the point along the shallow bay to the northern end of what is known as Sandy Beach; east to encompass *Łouwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)* fishing grounds; and west to encompass berry picking, medicinal plant harvesting, hunting, and other resource collection areas. For the purposes of this traditional occupancy and use project, the area of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is depicted on Figure 5.1.

As reported by Cold Lake First Nations members, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* actually extended further north towards the Medley River (January 27, 2012 Review Meeting), beyond the area depicted in Figure 5.1. As a result of a number of developments, including the Whispering Spruce Estates residential developments (Section 6.0), access between *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* proper and the more northerly areas was affected and so these areas are excluded from the extent depicted on Figure 5.1.



**Figure 5.1 Jié Houchálá/Berry Point Spatial Extent**

From the perspective of Cold Lake First Nation study participants the entirety of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a single, large site consisting of many different activities occurring in space and time. While this report details different types of occupancy and use activities in Sections 5.4 and 5.5, the value or meaningfulness of any given traditional use and occupancy locale and activities throughout the *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* area does not exist in isolation from the whole. *'It's all connected'*. Rather, the entire complex of use and occupancy areas present within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is required to support the use and occupancy of any given locale or activity area that makes up the larger whole.

### **5.3 Jié Houchálá/Berry Point as a 'Living on the Land Gathering Place'**

The concept of a *"living on the land gathering place"* is integral to understanding *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Within the boreal forest not all areas are equally suited to traditional use and community habitation. *"Living on the land gathering places"* support an abundance of plant and animal resources in close proximity, creating the conditions for easy procurement of sufficient resources to sustain large gatherings of people.

As noted in Section 4.1.9, before 1952, Cold Lake First Nations families extensively occupied the *summer living on the land* areas in accordance with long-established patterns of ancestral use. Gathering places in *Denne Ni Nennè* are situated near fishing lakes with an abundance of animals and berries nearby and are described as *"living on the land places"* (Section 4.1.9). There are only a few *"living on the land places"* within *Denne Ni Nennè* including, *K'ai Hucila (Willow Point)*, French Bay, *Hoka (Suckerville on Primrose Lake)*, and *Jié Houchálá (Berry Point)*.

As an encompassing construct, a *living on the land place* includes physical, cultural, economic (livelihood), ecological, and spiritual dimensions. As evidenced by the living memories of the place, the documentation of its occupancy and use and its unique characteristics, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is an example of a *living on the land gathering place*, and is embedded in a larger matrix of interconnected lands and cultural places that comprise the Cold Lake First Nations traditional territory, *Denne Ni Nennè* itself.

Specific and detailed information on Cold Lake First Nations traditional occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and related adjacent areas in the context of a *"living on the land gathering place"* is presented in the following sections (Sections 5.4 and 5.5).

### **5.4 Occupancy Areas, Activities and Relationships**

As noted in Section 5.2, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a single "site" that consists of many integrated occupancy and use activities occurring over space and time throughout that site. For the purposes of this report, categories have been applied by the research team to delineate:

- *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Seasonal Settlement/Camps
- Trails, in particular Primrose Trail
- Burials
- Named Places and Landmarks



- Prayer/Ceremony/Healing and Peaceful Enjoyment of Place
- Trading Posts

These categories are somewhat artificial in that they connote discrete activities; in fact, most occupancy activities and locales are interrelated, not only with each other but also with other uses such as harvesting (Section 1.5). Not only are they interrelated, but they are also interdependent. The entire complex of use and occupancy areas present within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is required to support the use and occupancy of any given locale or activity area that makes up the larger whole.

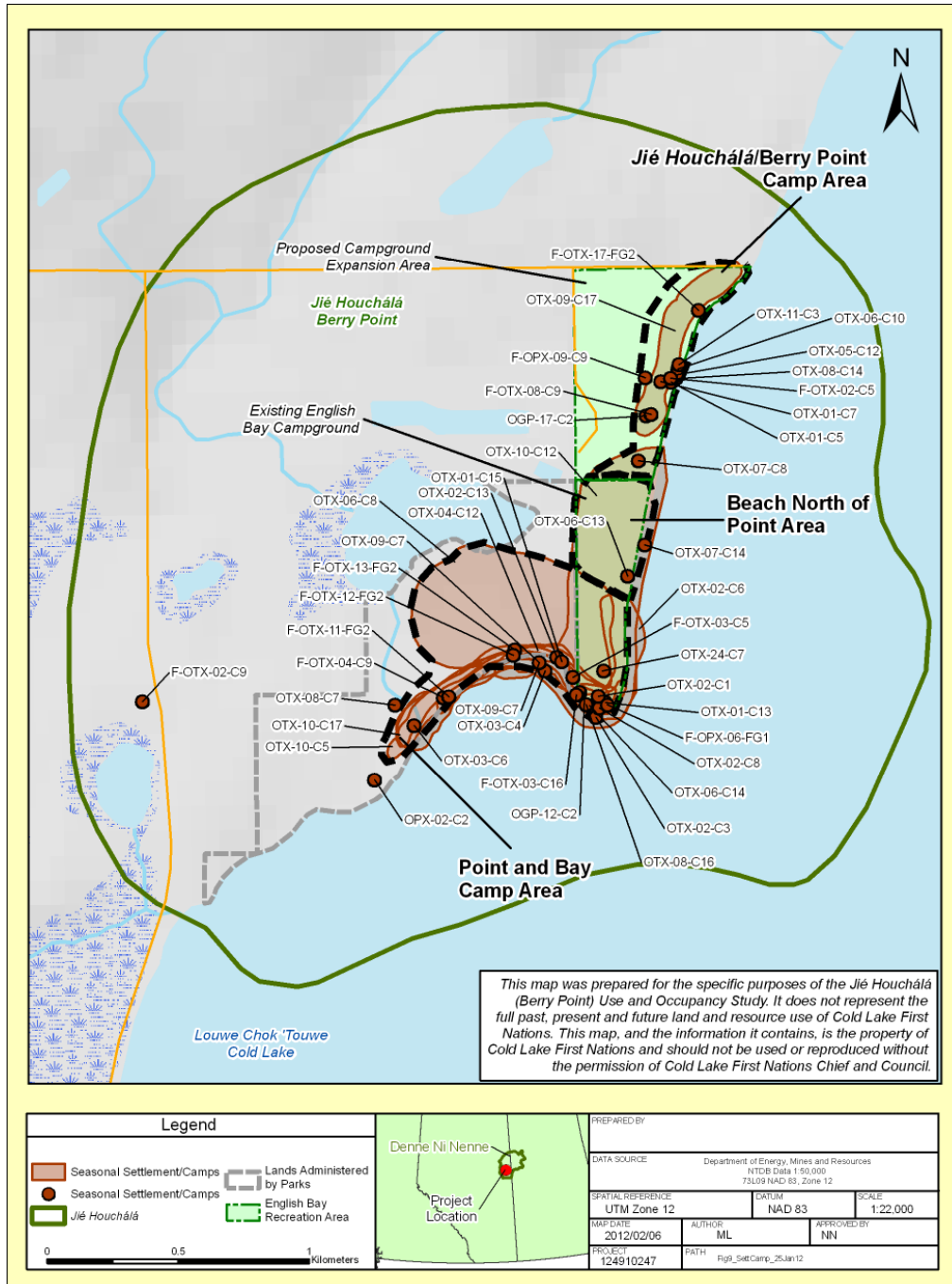
#### **5.4.1 *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Seasonal Settlement/Camps**

Cold Lake First Nations seasonal camps/settlements within *Denne Ni Nennè* are associated with multi-family resource harvesting (e.g., fishing, berry picking, meat-drying) and have a history of long-standing gentle collective use (see Section 4.2). Generally, there are few, if any, permanent living structures (i.e. cabins). The locations of seasonal camps and settlements are based on taking advantage of recurring/cyclical abundances of food resources and many other activities (harvesting or otherwise) were/are carried out. Many seasonal camps were used throughout the year and through time by many generations of Cold Lake First Nations.

Based on the information provided by study participants in the course of interviews and mapping sessions, as well as the collective oral history recounted by Cold Lake First Nations members during community meetings, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a long-standing (ancestral) seasonal settlement area that has been continuously used by all Cold Lake First Nations clans and families. Forty-five historic and current camp locations, including at least two different cabins associated with these traditional camps, were mapped during interviews and field visits (Table 5.1; Figure 5.2).

In analyzing and amalgamating the spatial information that has been provided orally about camps and cabins by Cold Lake First Nations study participants, the settlement at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* consisted of three distinct camp areas (Figure 5.2):

- (1) The Point and Bay area, which was the most heavily occupied by multiple families and for multiple uses;
- (2) The Beach North of Point Camp area, which included Boniface Andrews Fish Camp; and
- (3) The *Jié Houchálá* North Camp area, which includes the area referred to as the “Grandbois Fish Camp”.



**Figure 5.2** *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Seasonal Settlement Area and Camps

**Table 5.1 - Camps and Cabins Mapped at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point***

#	Site Code	Description
1	OGP-17-C2	Boniface Andrew's fishing camp
2	OTX-08-C14	Old camp
3	OTX-06-C10	C10's camp
4	OTX-05-C12	Place where people camped just north of the fish hatchery by the lake
5	OTX-11-C3	Camping area, last used three years ago (2008)
6	OTX-01-C5	C5's fish camp; last used May – July 2011
7	OTX-01-C7	C7's family camp by Doyle's; <i>"We always camped; my grandchildren and I until 2005 sometime when they started fencing and put a gate up there and we couldn't go in there anymore."</i>
8	OTX-07-C8	Camping spot: <i>"We lived at this end here, right at the tip of the south end of this place here."</i>
9	OTX-09-C17	Camping spot; last used summer 2010
10	OTX-10-C12	Camp
11	OTX-02-C3	C3's camp; last used about 5 years ago before <i>"they shut down them roads"</i> (can no longer access it).
12	OPX-02-C2	Abandoned trailer used as a camp in the 1970s
13	OTX-07-C14	Old camp on the beach just north of the point
14	OTX-02-C13	C13's grandparent's camp
15	OTX-03-C6	Campsite where the creek runs into the lake
16	OTX-08-C7	Fishing camp
17	OTX-09-C7	Fish camp, 1990s
18	OTX-03-C4	Camp at Berry Point; used summer 2011
19	OTX-01-C15	Camp
20	OTX-08-C16	C16's parent's camp
21	OTX-10-C5	Area on the shore of Berry Point where many people camped; C10 last camped there in the 1980s
22	OTX-10-C17	Camping area; last used in summer 2010

Cold Lake First Nations *Jié Houchálá (Berry Point)* Traditional Land Use and Occupancy  
 Section 5: *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Traditional Use and Occupancy

---

23	OTX-02-C6	Camping area to the west of the point and including the area where people camped in tents
24	OTX-02-C8	Camping area
25	OGP-12-C2	Fishing camp (8 – 10 tents) at end of November into December
26	OTX-04-C12	Area where people used to camp; cannot camp as much in there anymore because of the Park
27	OTX-06-C14	People used to camp here; can't camp here anymore
28	OTX-01-C13	C13's parent's camp
29	OTX-06-C13	Camping area used by many families
30	OPX-24-C7	Cabin, owner unknown
31	OTX-02-C8	Camping at Berry Point
32	OTX-02-C1	People lived here
33	F-OTX-17-FG2	C17's camp. A smoke shack here was vandalized.
34	F-OTX-02-C5	C5's camp. In 2006 a smokehouse was built here. It was vandalized in 2008. Other families also use this camping spot.
35	F-OTX-03-C5	Area that people used to camp
36	F-OTX-03-C16	C16's dad's old camp. C16's father and Larry Grandbois " <i>lived here all the time.</i> " Last camped here in 1987. Barricades came up along the old road in the late 1980s, preventing people from accessing the camp.
37	F-OPX-06-FG1	Remains of a cabin (rectangular depression, defined by four low, collapsed walls), approximately 12x16 feet
38	F-OTX-11-FG2	Current camp (set up May 4, 2011)
39	F-OTX-04-C9	Solomon and Catherine Nest used to camp here.
40	F-OTX-12-FG2	Morris and Eva Janvier's camp, just north of Solomon and Catherine Nest camp, circa 1970s.
41	OTX-06-C7	Fish camp west of the point
42	OTX-09-C7	Fish camp; last used in 1990s before they started " <i>blocking everything off</i> "
43	F-OTX-02-C9	Edward and Sophie Minoose Camp

44	OTX-06-C8	General Camping Area
45	F-OTX-02-C5	Area where people used to camp

The continuous occupation of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* has been seasonal in nature and timed in accordance with the availability of key resources (fish and berries). Prior to 1952, before the eviction from the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range occupation of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* was also associated with the movement of families back and forth to the winter trapping grounds around Primrose Lake. Post-1952, the use and occupation of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* continued and became even more significant to Cold Lake First Nations families because the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range greatly reduced the land base available from which to derive a livelihood.

Historically, there was a seasonal yearly fishing settlement consisting of tent camps, erected along the lakeshore at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Summer fishing and berry picking camps would also be set up, in the same locations. The annual use of these locations continued until a series of developments in the mid to late 1980s restricted access and disrupted the ability of Cold Lake First Nations members to establish camps. This includes construction and opening of the fish hatchery (opened in 1987) and the erection of barricades across trails into these customary camp locations at the south end of English Bay Provincial Park. The additional barrier at the north end of the English Bay Recreation Area, erected in 2005, prevented easy access to the last of the Cold Lake First Nations customary/ancestral camp areas and disrupted use (see Section 6.0).

The annual camps at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* were brought up frequently and in great detail in many of the interviews. For example, when a Cold Lake First Nations octogenarian was asked who lived at Berry Point when he was young, the following account was provided:

*“I guess pretty well everybody [lived there] I guess... Everybody lived there; they would go there. That’s the way it was. Because everybody had the rights. We don’t fight; we try to just get along. We lived together. In those years we travelled with horses and we set up camps; sometimes four or five tents together, fishing or berry picking, or something at a certain time of the year. You don’t go anytime. So fishing was more or less done in the fall. The only thing is that people used to always be there; there was always somebody around. That’s where old Janvier and his old lady died right there. There was lots of us; lots of people there at that time. That was more or less a camping place. We’d just walk over there for the berries. That’s why they called it Berry Point. So for people that was their grounds. Nobody could chase us out or anything; nobody bothered us. That’s the way it was” (C3).*

Another Cold Lake First Nations septuagenarian similarly recounted the names and activities of the people who lived at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

*“There was about ten tents there. I tell you we stayed there right until Christmas...Her dad [referring to C16], Solomon Piche, and old Arsene Desjardins he used to stay there. And then there was lots of them... Alec Metchewais. And there was Algier Arness. Cambier from south; I don’t know his first name. What’s his first name in English? We used to call him ‘metchyass’ – he was an old boy; well he was young that time. He was a young man at that time... Maurice Janvier was there and his brother Paul Janvier and their dad. Their dad’s mother got sick there, Old Xavier? Janvier, their dad, he was there too.... I tell you there must have been ten tents around there at this point; around here. Right in here, we’d stay around here. Right on the point. That’s what they were doing there. All over there. Lots of*

*tents around there.... I was young, about 14 or 15. Then that time they have the fish, like I was telling you,...How they put the fish away. They hang them; they put ten. They take a stick about that long and they carve out everything smooth and they pin the fish on the tail and the back, all the way. They don't gut them or anything, but they make a little hole near the heart or something and they bleed them. The blood runs out; that's how they do it. Then they freeze like that and then they put them away like that. That's what they were doing when they were there. A lot of people would do that when they were right here. Tents all around in here.” (C2).*

The repeatedly reported means of access to these camp locations was originally walking, using dog teams/dog packs, then horses and wagons, followed by motorized vehicles. Access by boat was never mentioned.

*“I used to commercial fish with the truck and most of the time we used dogs, we used horses. We finally used trucks. And everybody would go there [Berry Point] with tie trucks, they had some sawmills up there [north of Berry Point]” (C3). “This was all wagons, horses” (C7). “People travelled by a team of horses in the past. That's all we had was horses” (C13).*

Based on the mapped information and recollections of Cold Lake First Nations members, there appears to be three major camp clusters which together comprise the *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* settlement as a whole. For ease of reference, and the purposes of this report, these camp clusters have been assigned names by the research team<sup>10</sup>: Point and Bay Camp Area; Beach North of the Point; and *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* North.

#### **5.4.1.1 Camp Clusters Comprising the Larger Seasonal Settlement**

##### ***Point and Bay Camping Area***

The first, and largest of the camp clusters, is in the area of the Point and the sheltered Bay to the south and west (Figure 5.2).

*“In the fall, like Berry Point, we would go camping there. We have a camp site.... Right on that point there...That's where the old people used to camp there” (C3).*

Other participants mentioned and/or mapped this specific area as well, including the Point and the area to the southwest along the sheltered bay (e.g., C1; C2; C7; C6; C13). Camps in this complex are spread out along the lakeshore from the tip of the point itself, westward and southward along the shore of the small bay to the point of land that defines the southern extent of the small bay and the northern extent of English Bay (Figure 5.2). The camps are ancestral/historic and current.

During the November 4 and 5, 2011 field visits, specific campsites associated with the Point and Bay camping complex were identified and recorded by participants. The area near the tip of the Point (F-OTX-03-C16) was identified as the place where participant C16's father “*lived here all the time*” with Larry Grandbois. A trail from this camping area to the lakeshore was identified by C16 as the trail to the lake that people used to get water. A little further to the west another camping area, along with what participants recalled as a “*boat launch*” was recorded. In this area, an old steel bed frame was identified. There were many culturally modified trees including bark-stripped birches throughout the point area, sawn stumps and other markings on trees (e.g., chop marks).

---

<sup>10</sup> These are not names used by Cold Lake First Nations

Additional camps were identified to the west along the shore of the sheltered bay. This included Solomon and Catherine Nest's camp (F-OTX-04-C9). According to C9 (November 5, 2011), Solomon and Catherine came here almost year after year in early August. A little to the north of Solomon and Catherine Nest's camp, is the camp of Morris and Eva Janvier (F-OTX-12-FG2). The little spit of land that juts into the lake on the shore here is where the people at the camp are reported to have collected their water (C9). The locations of these camps have also been used by other Cold Lake First Nations members and families.

According to the interview information, there were at least one, and possibly two cabins in the Point area (C13; C7) and one to the south along the shore of the sheltered bay (C2). Participant C13 recounts her recollection of cabins at Berry Point:

*"There was a cabin there, but for me I never questioned about those things. I didn't know; I was only about 8 or 9 years old. I never knew why all those cabins were there... There were two that I remember, but I never questioned whose houses they were."*

Participant C7 also mentioned a cabin at the Point, other than Doyle's homestead (see Section 6.1). *"There was one here... I have no idea whose cabin that was. It was a little cabin there (OPX-24-C7)"* (C7).

During the field visit on November 4, 2011, the field visit team identified the remains of a cabin near the tip of the Point (F-OPX-06-FG1; Figure 5.2). This consists of a rectangular depression, defined by four low berms, likely the remains of the wall logs, approximately 12 by 16 feet in size. Also identified in association with the cabin depression were a number of tin food cans. This cabin may be the same one that was reported by participant C7. The mapped location is in the same vicinity as participant C7 grandparent's camp where she stayed.

Participant C2 and his father also had a cabin, consisting of a trailer, at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, to the south on the point of land that defines the northern extent of English Bay and the southern extent of the sheltered bay west of Berry Point.

*"Where that point is... right here basically there used to be – somebody left a trailer here, so my dad used to stay there (OPX-02-C2). And I stayed over there in the fall, like this time.... somebody left a trailer there and my dad claimed it because nobody lived in it for about two or three years. So he fixed it up and we lived in there...that was in the 1970s" (C2).*

The location mapped during the interviews was not visited during the November 4 and 5 field visits and it is unknown whether remains of the trailer are still present.

The muskeg that is just to the west of the higher ground along the beach area was used for caching fish (C1; C5; C16) prior to the proliferation of electricity (early 1960s).

*"This area, it used to be all muskeg... that's where they used to cache their fish in the muskeg... They dug a hole in the muskeg and then they would put trees on top. Sometimes people made a door on a cache, so they could crawl in and go get their fish. The snow would cover it, you wouldn't notice where it was, so they would make a mark on a tree close by it" (C16; location mapped as OFC-17-C6, see Figure 5.2).*

According to participant C16 (born in the 1940s), this practice still occurred when she was a girl. The use of this area for caching fish is reflected in the old *Denesuline* name for the place, *Łué tsá k'e* (place where you cache fish) (see Section 5.4.4).

Based on interviews, the annual seasonal settlement in this area declined coinciding with the erection of barriers (sometime in the late 1980s or 1990s) that prevented vehicle access to camps in the Point and Bay Complex (e.g., C16; C3; C6; C7). Recently, however, several current camps were re-established and have been mapped in this area (F-OTX-11-FG2; OTX-03-C4; OTX-10-C17).

### ***Beach North of the Point Camping Area***

This area is situated in and around the Beach area to the north of the Point and south of the fish hatchery (Figure 5.2). Two participants mapped camps (OTX-07-C14 and OTX-06-C13) in the area, one of whom characterized this as a “*camping area used by many families*” (C13).

While not discussed in interviews, it is likely that use of the Beach Area North of the Point declined after construction of the English Bay Provincial Park campground, as this camping location is in the vicinity of the beach and cookhouse and recreational use would have interfered with Cold Lake First Nations use.

### ***Jié Houchálá/Berry Point North Camping Area***

The third camping complex is concentrated in the area near the current fish hatchery and north (Figure 5.2).

*“I used to camp right at that hatchery, right out there. I’d stay out there two – three weeks at a time. My dad and I, and old (Boniface) Andrew used to live over here, right close; we’d stay close to each other. And there’s some other guys that used to camp around there too, not only me but the boys from the reserve here. I’ve seen some boys from here that used to camp up there; [C5] and them, they used to camp up there. Wilfred Grandbois and Alphonse Amable, they used to camp there too. I camped there; a lot of us used to camp around that area, around the hatchery. It’s good fishing out there, that’s why we fished”* (C2).

This area includes, among others, locations mapped and referred to as “Boniface Andrews Fish Camp”, the area referred to in recent Historical Resources Impact Assessments as the “Grandbois Fish Camp” and a current camp to the north (F-OTX-16-FG2).

As noted by a number of study participants, Boniface Andrews was a Cold Lake First Nations member who had a fish camp “*just past the pumphouse*” of the current fish hatchery (C14). His “*fishing grounds*” were “*just past the point a bit, about 300 feet past the point, Berry Point...straight down from that fish hatchery*” (C3).: “*Well old Boniface Andrew used to live there practically all summer; right here (OGP-17-C2). That’s his fishing grounds around there*” (C2).

The area referred to in previous Historical Resources Impact Assessment Studies (Graham et al. 2006) as the “Grandbois Fish Camp”, based on interview and map information, goes beyond the use of a single family. Use of this area was recalled by many participants as reflected in the multiple site codes assigned to this area: OTX-11-C3; OTX-06-C10; OTX-08-C14; OTX-01-C5; F-OTX-02-C5; OTX-05-C12; OTX-01-C7). While this area is, indeed, a past and current fishing camp for two different Grandbois families, it is has also been used frequently by other families as well (e.g., C7’s family), at least until such time as the access to this camp location was seriously constrained by the erection of the gate at the north end of English Bay Recreation Area. A smoke rack that had been erected here by a member of Cold Lake First Nations several years ago has been destroyed (November 5, 2011 field visit; C5)



Further to the north, is another current camp (F-OTX-16-FG2), identified as belonging to participant C17 (November 5, 2011 field visit). This camp has a stone-encircled fire pit and a smoke rack.

While not discussed in interviews, it is likely that use of the Boniface Andrews Fish Camp location declined after construction of the fish hatchery (as clearing and construction of a pump station in the vicinity of this camping area would have impacted the quality of the location). Use of the camps to the north of the fish hatchery continued.

#### **5.4.1.2 Camps at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* in the Current Context**

As mentioned in earlier subsections (and described more fully in Section 6.0), the erection of barriers that prevented vehicle access into customary camping locations impeded Cold Lake First Nations ability to access and use traditional camps at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, especially in the southern area around the point and bay. Fish camps continued around the location referred to as the “Grandbois Fish Camp” because it was still accessible by vehicle until around 2005 when a gate was erected at the northern entrance to English Bay Recreation Area. These barriers largely discouraged many Cold Lake First Nations members from accessing and using traditional camps, although some currently used camps are present (F-OTX-11-FG2; OTX-10-C17; F-OTX-16-FG2).

#### **5.4.2 Trails**

As described in Section 4.2.3 there is a vast trail network within *Denne Ni Nennè*, and beyond, which connected Cold Lake First Nations to all places within *Denne Ni Nennè* and other *Dene* and non-*Dene* peoples and settlements throughout western and northern Canada. Many of these trails are ancient; others are more recent. The *Primrose Trail* from *Louwe Chok ‘Tue (Cold Lake)* to *Ah ‘Touwe (Primrose Lake)* is of special significance to the Nation because of the long standing (ancestral) use in the seasonal movements of family between winter and summer homes and hunting and trapping grounds.

Besides their central role as the connecting *arteries* to settlements and harvesting area, trails are the repositories of many stories that relate to a wide range of events significant to Cold Lake First Nations members and families, individually and collectively. Some are funny; others are tragic events that occurred as people were travelling or living on the land. There are many such stories associated with *Primrose Trail*.

*“...there are a lot of graves all along the road going to Primrose. My mother in law lost her baby. My mother in law, her first year of marriage, she was pregnant, and they were up at Primrose. When it was time for her to have her baby, she didn’t want to have it over there. So what she did one day without letting anybody know, she started walking back from Primrose by herself. She walked a long ways. On the road she had her baby by herself. It was cold, in January, and the baby froze. And it happened, you know the native people from Bighead would come sometimes through to visit or just to trade or get fish. They met her walking back. They took her; she was almost dead with the baby like that... A lot of tragedies along that road.” (C7)*

*Primrose Trail* has been referred to as the Cold Lake First Nations *Trail of Tears* in reference to the tragedies that occurred and the final eviction march out of *Ah ‘Tue (Primrose Lake)* when the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range was created (October 31, 2011 community scoping meeting).

The ancient *Denesuline* trail networks south of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range, particularly around Cold Lake are reported to have been in use until the recent creation of provincial parks (see Section

4.3.4). Segments of old trails are still evident and intact, with deep well-worn tracks. They are highly valued because they are the evidence of the ancestors who have gone before

*“The roads are important because it’s proof that we were there....that we use those areas” (C8)*

Disturbance and destruction of ancestral trails is considered to be a way of obliterating the evidence of original *Denesuline* occupation of the land. Of these ancestral trails, the one known as *Primrose Trail* is perhaps most significant to Cold Lake First Nations.

*Primrose Trail* is described as “the main road” for *Denesuline*, that extends from Le Goff to ‘*Ah Touwe (Primrose Lake)*, passing through *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (Section 4.2.3). After reaching the town of Cold Lake from Le Goff, the trail generally follows the shores of Cold Lake north, through English Bay and *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, to just south of Medley River, where it swings onto higher ground to the west of the lake shore. After crossing Medley River, the trail trends east again, to run along the lakeshore around the area of the present-day Medley Day-use Recreation Area/Cold Lake Provincial Park. From there, it continues north along the lakeshore to North Bay, where it leaves the shore to cross overland to *Ah Touwe (Primrose Lake)*.

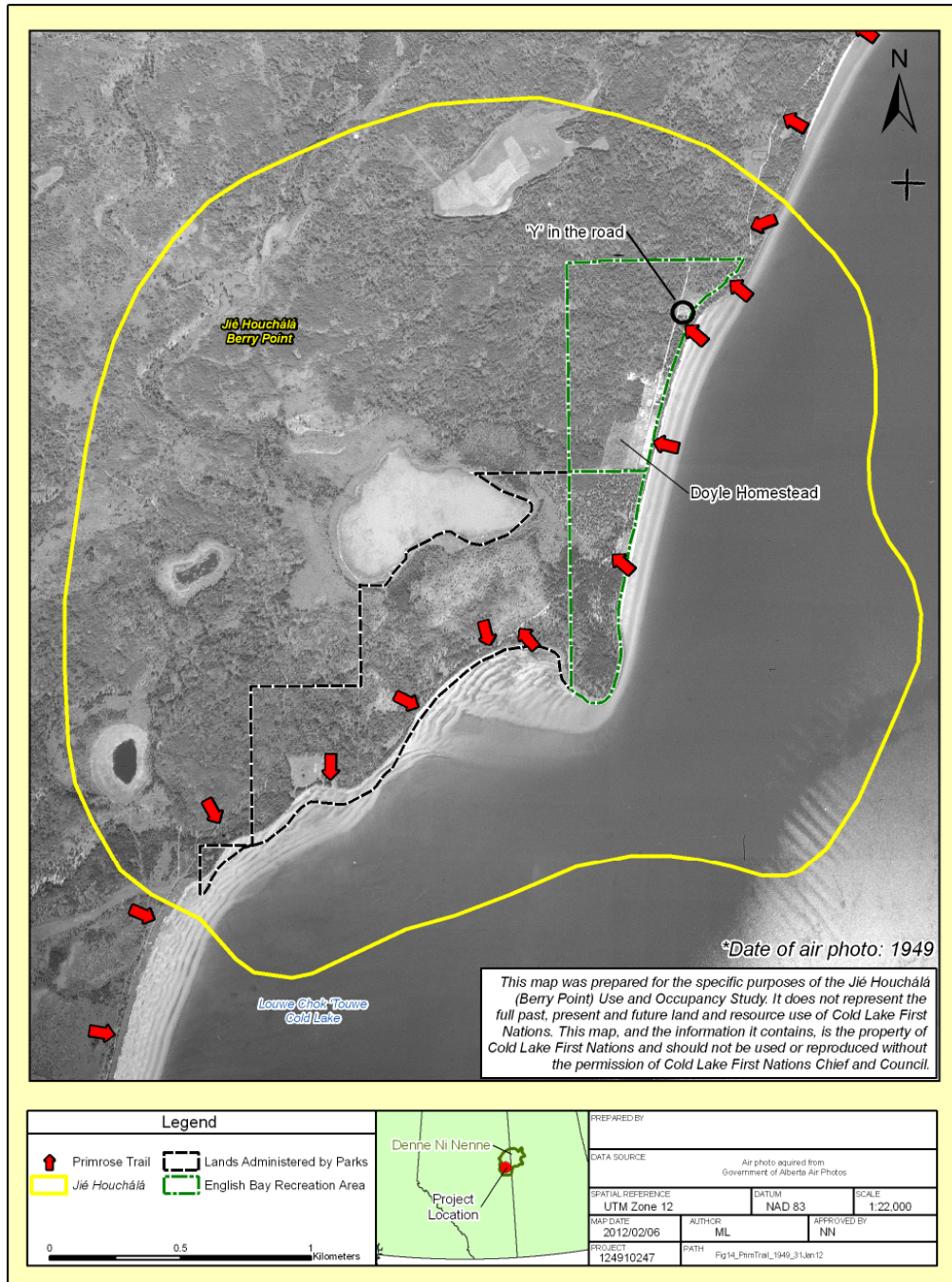
*“The road was right along the lake, all the way to Smith’s. We called it Smith’s at North Bay. And that’s where the road going to Primrose is; that’s 12 mile portage in between Cold Lake and Primrose” (C3).*

For the purposes of this project, the area of focus is that section of *Primrose Trail* that traverses *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. During interviews and field visits for this project, participants emphasized the importance of *Primrose Trail* as well as its ancestral relationship to Cold Lake First Nations.

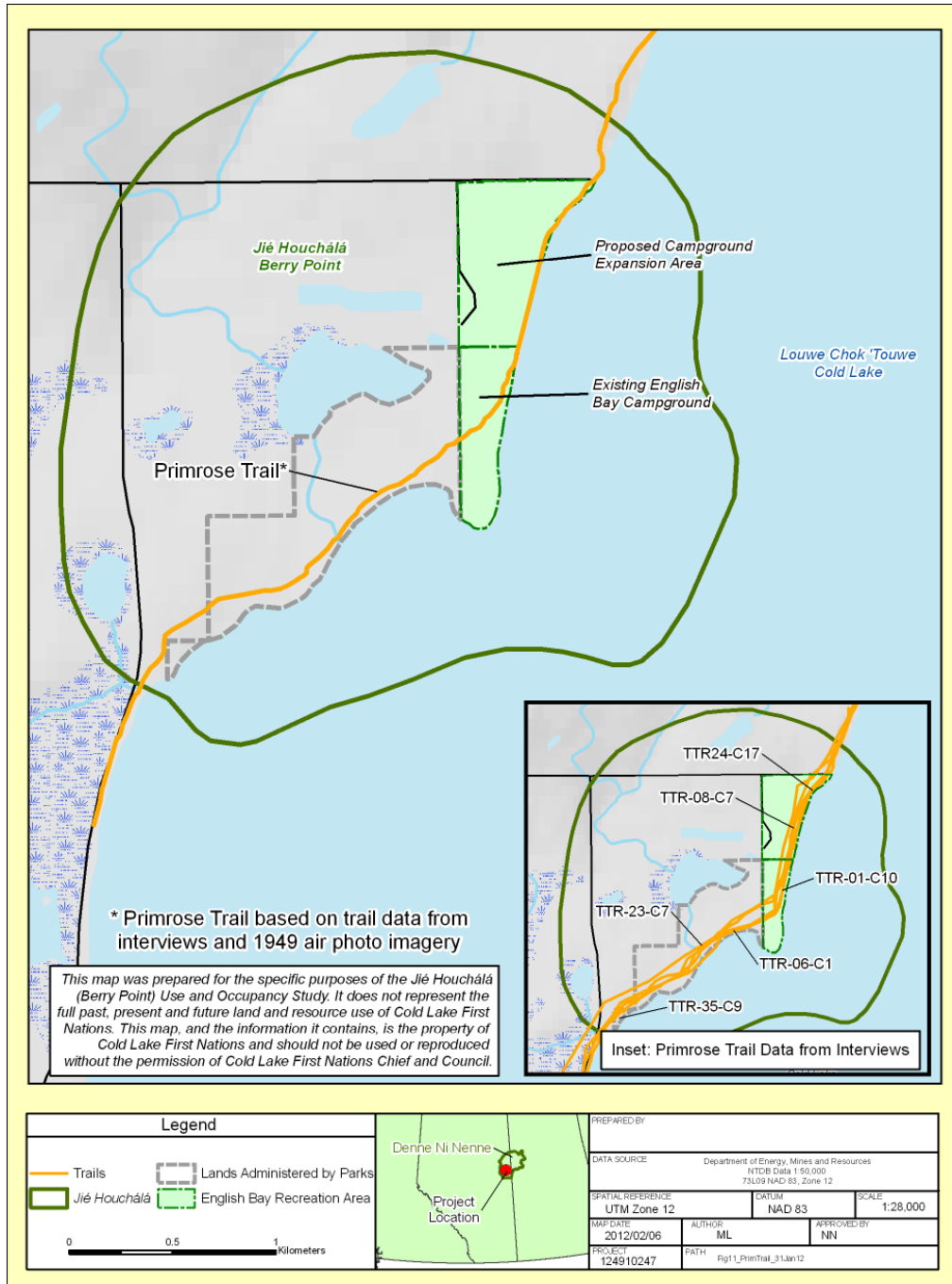
*The main road going north was right there. And in the past, before my time, we’ve been using them lands, my great-grandfathers’ times, and pre-that. So to get north you had to go through Berry Point; that was the only way” (C5).*

*“Well that’s our road going to Primrose right there... that’s our main drag that one. We had no other road the other way; just that one, going north... My great grandfathers [made the road] I guess. It was like a wagon road. Then after they used vehicles” (C3).*

Study participants consistently described the *Primrose Trail* as following the lakeshore, save for where it crosses over the “base” of the Point itself (C10, C7, C17, C2, C5, C1; November 4, 5, 2011 field visits).



**Figure 5.3 1949 Air Photo Showing Primrose Trail (Red Arrows Used to Point to Trail)**



**Figure 5.4** Primrose Trail through *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*

*"I've lived here ever since I was a kid... That was our trail, even here. This is our trail right here where this is. And it goes right along the lake. And there are two roads; one road going this way to Primrose and one the other way (to Marie Lake)" (C3). "It ran right along the lake, until you got off to go to Primrose" (C7). "[Interviewer: Can you show us where the old trail used to run through English Bay?]* Well right along the lake; right along the lake... right through Berry Point, right along the lake" (C3).

Based on mapped information, as well as analysis of an historic air photo (dated 1949; Figure 5.3) of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, the segment of the *Primrose Trail* traversing the Point is depicted in (Figure 5.4). As can be seen on the historic air photo (Figure X), there is a long linear clearing that extends north-northwest of Doyle's homestead. In the current context, there is now a "Y" in the trail with the west segment being the original *Primrose Trail* and the east segment in the area of the Doyle-related clearing. This "Y in the road", as it is referred to by Cold Lake First Nations members, is significant because it is used as a landmark in their recollections of the location of burials.

According to Cold Lake First Nations oral history, the ancestral *Denesuline Primrose Trail* was "upgraded" by the military shortly after the creation of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (C9 November 5, 2011 field visit). Traditional dog and wagon trails would naturally have many bends and twists in them as they would follow paths of least resistance, winding in and around barriers such as large trees. *Upgrading* consisted of widening and straightening the road in sections, to enable the movement of large, heavy equipment, machinery and loads being transported to the weapons range, and clearing new trail in some places. Sections of the trail that were subject to military *upgrade* or new clearing are distinguishable from areas that were not so disturbed because the military created a berm of heaped soil alongside the trail.

Despite closure of CLAWR to Cold Lake First Nations in 1952, and any military "upgrades" to the trail, Cold Lake First Nations use of *Primrose Trail* continued. Not only was the trail used to access seasonal camps along *Louwe Chok 'Tue (Cold Lake)*, such as *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, and those further north at Medley River, North Bay and Martineau River, it was also used to access saw mills and tie camps where Cold Lake First Nations members were seasonally contracted.

The segment of *Primrose Trail* going through *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* also passed by the Doyle Homestead, which was established in 1934. According to interview participants, Doyle did not interfere with the Nation's use of the trail (C7; C15; C3).

*"He [Jim Doyle] had a house there away from the lakeshore, about 100 yards, but the road is right along the lake... we'd go by his house on our way around.... there was no problem. He knew us. He had the respect for us" (C3).*

The relationship between the Doyle's and Cold Lake First Nations use and occupancy of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is discussed further in Section 6.0. Members of the Nation are affronted by the suggestion that segments of the *Primrose Trail* through *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* are reported to be built by Jim Doyle.

*"We the Denesuline built the roads so tthat'ine [white people] didn't make those roads." (C8)*

Besides the segment of the *Primrose Trail* that extends through *Jié Houchálá (Berry Point)*, a number of other trails were described in the area. This includes a trail (HKS-03-C7), used for snaring rabbits (Figure 5.11), as well as an "old wagon trail" (F-TTR-22-FG2) used for spring moose hunting at the small lakes to the west of Cold Lake and to the south of the fish hatchery; and access trails into the area of the Point itself (not mapped).

### 5.4.3 Burials

Untold numbers of burials have taken place within *Denne Ni Nennè* over the course of thousands of years and across the generations of *Denesuline*.

*"[T]hey used to tell us that, well, when people got sick and they died, they would bury them anyplace... there's burial grounds all the way long the lake shore" (C8). "[I]f some small kid died, especially a small one, they would just bury him on the trapline. Anyplace... [T]hey didn't bring them out here that's for sure. You had to bury them where you were at. That's what my mom used to say" (C2).*

*"[T]here's graveyards here, all along here.... The whole way. Because before the white man came... Father LeGoff and that, when people passed away, they couldn't bring them back all the way from wherever they were when they were walking with dog teams and that. So they were buried over there" (C10). "[W]hen they were moving, when people got sick there was no medication if they had serious disease or sickness, pneumonia, whatever; and they'd die of that and then wherever they were they'd bury them. So a lot of people are buried here, and along the road, all the way to Primrose Lake, there's people" (C8).*

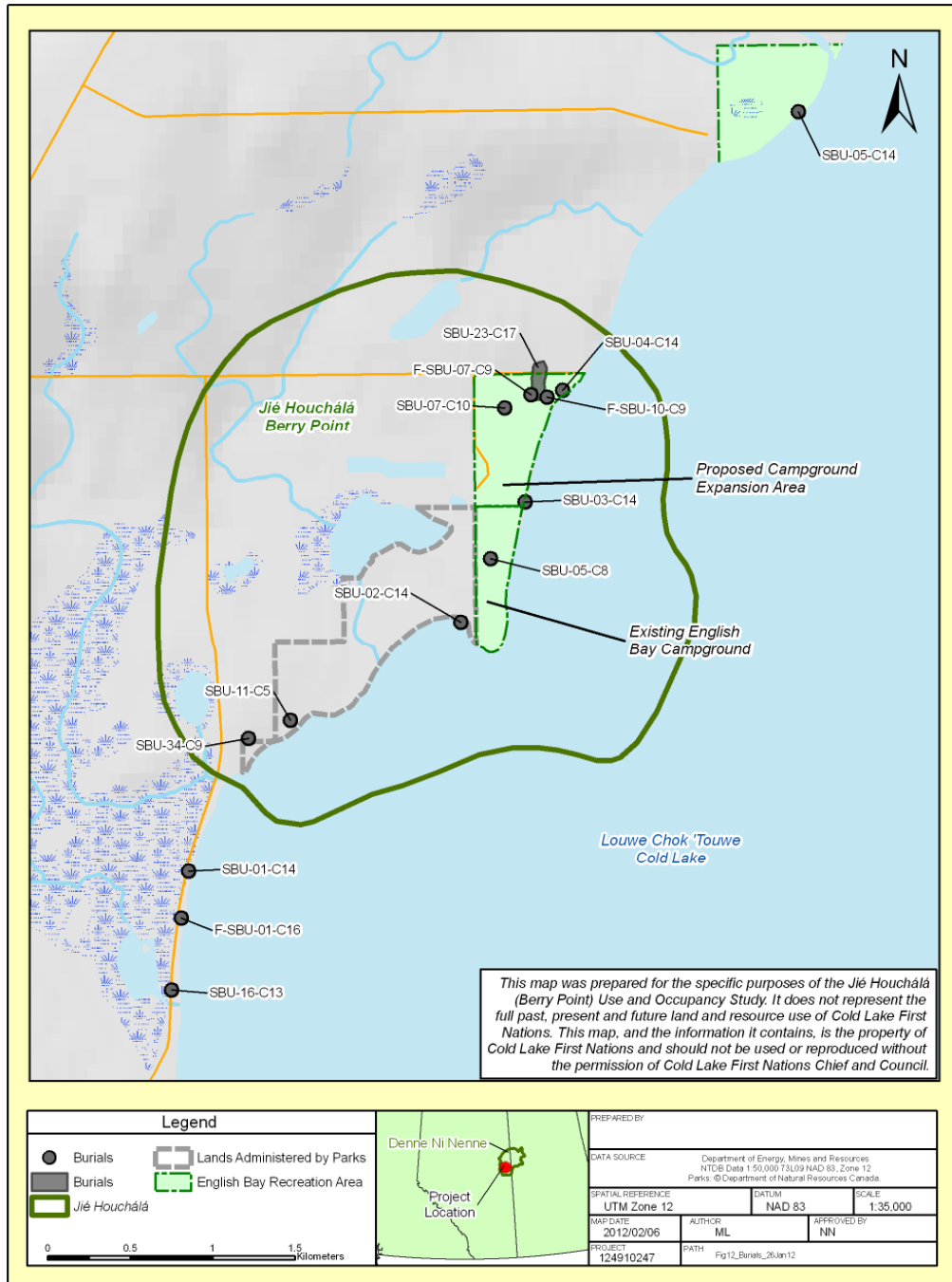
The presence of burials is forefront in Cold Lake First Nations members minds and stories about *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Fourteen known burials within, and in the vicinity of, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* were mapped during interviews (Table 5.2; Figure 5.5) and stories about the presence of burials throughout *Denne Ni Nennè* and along *Primrose Trail* were prominent in interviews. All of the mapped burial locations are in close association with the *Primrose Trail*. Additional, unmapped information on death places and burials was also recounted in interview sessions.

The majority of the burials locations and information are based on oral history (what participants have been told and shown by their parents, grandparents, and other Elders).

*"I don't know exactly where, but that's the only one I know of. And I know of it firsthand because of my grandmother used to say that when we passed by. She would mention that there was a baby born that was buried there... Somebody said there used to be a cross there" (C5 regarding SBU-11-C5).*

Two of the burial locations (SBU-07-C10 and SBU-05-C8) were identified independently of a previously known location and are not known to be tied to a specific oral tradition. One of these locations (SBU-05-C8) was identified by the participant while picking berries and consists of three to four possible graves: *"there's grave sites there because you could see... squares like this... the ground had sunken in, that was grave sites I guess. There was about 3 or 4 that I've seen there, my sister and I used to say 'that looks like a grave site.'... [I]n '07, my sister and I were walking here and picking berries up here. There was about three places ... sunken in. Those are, I'm sure are gravesites" (C8).* The other (SBU-07-C10) is located close to what is known as the "Grandbois Fish Camp": *"I found a grave there too.... You know right where our camp was? Right behind there where they took those trees down, they just missed it by about 20 feet" (C10).*

It is important to note that the mapped location of burials are not be interpreted as the actual physical location. There is an unknown margin of error in mapping burial locations that are known to exist through oral traditions and memory since the actual physical location may be unclear in those same traditions. The mapped locations, therefore, are not meant to represent exact locations, but rather to demonstrate the knowledge that there are, indeed, burials known to be located in the area.



**Figure 5.5** Burials Mapped at, and in the Vicinity of, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*

**Table 5.2 Burials Mapped at, and in the Vicinity of, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point***

#	Site Code	Description
<i>Within Jié Houchálá/ Berry Point</i>		
1	SBU-11-C5	Grave – shown to him by his grandmother
2	SBU-05-C8	4 graves by the cook shack identified in 2007 while berry picking with her sister
3	SBU-34-C9	Grave next to cabin (by Len Alsap's place)
4	F-SBU-07-C9	There is a grave in this area somewhere (exact location unknown) on this hill, it was here at the turn of the century, as told to C9 by Elders during Primrose Lake Claim Research
5	F-SBU-10-C9	Area where there are two graves, (exact location unknown) just north of the "Y" in the road, as told to C9 by Elders during Primrose Lake Claim Research
6	SBU-07-C10	Grave – identified while encamped at Berry Point
7	SBU-02-C14	Graves of two elders
8	SBU-03-C14	2 graves next to the lake right on top of the edge of the bank
9	SBU-04-C14	2 graves on the west side of the old road
10	SBU-23-C17	Burial site, exact location uncertain
<i>Outside of Jié Houchálá/ Berry Point</i>		
11	SBU-01-C14	Graves of twin children; " <i>They were here before us, they were here before me</i> "
12	F-SBU-01-C16	Grave site of twins
13	SBU-16-C13	Graves of twins, as told to C13 by mother
14	SBU-05-C14	2 graves south of Medley River

Furthermore, it is likely that in at least two instances multiple mapped locations may represent or refer to a single burial location in and around *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. The first involves the three burial locations mapped south of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* in the *Sandy Beach* area (SBU-16-C12, F-SBU-01-C16, and SBU-01-C14). It is likely that the three different mapped locations, all of which are identified as those of twin children, refer to a single event (i.e. the burial of the twins).



*"Before you hit English Bay, that Berry Point, right along the Lake. There's two twins, right along the road there" (C14). "Right in here, this is where my mom said there were two graves... I heard her saying that a couple times... I really don't know exactly where it is" (C13).*

The location F-SBU-01-C16 was identified by participant C16 during the November 5, 2011 site visit and is likely more accurate than the other two mapped locations (provided that they do all, indeed, refer to a single event) because C16 had been shown the burial locations in the past by her mother and in more recent years by another Elder. According to C16, the grave of the twins is located between two big jackpine trees. The identified grave is a rectangular depression that is oriented east-west. Prayers and tobacco were offered in the course of the field visit.

The other instance of multiple mapped locations possibly referring to the same instance with respect to the *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* mapped burial locations involves the mapped locations SBU-23-C17, F-SBU-10-C9, SBU-04-C14, and F-SBU-07-C9, which all occur in a cluster. The information was provided with varying levels of confidence by the various study participants. What is known, without a doubt, is that there are at least two burials in this area to the west of the road; the exact location of the burials is more difficult to determine. Focus groups and field visit with knowledgeable members (those who have been shown exactly and in person, by parents and grandparents, where the burial locations are) is required to assist in determining the actual, physical, locations of these burials.

Alternatively, from Cold Lake First Nations perspective, a more meaningful approach would be to respect these general areas regardless of whether or not the exact physical locations of burials are identified or not.

Besides burials, places where people died were also mentioned. For example: *"[O]ld Janvier, his old lady died right there.... That was about twenty years ago; maybe a little more.... This is Berry Point right there. That's Cecile Janvier there. She died right there" (C3).*

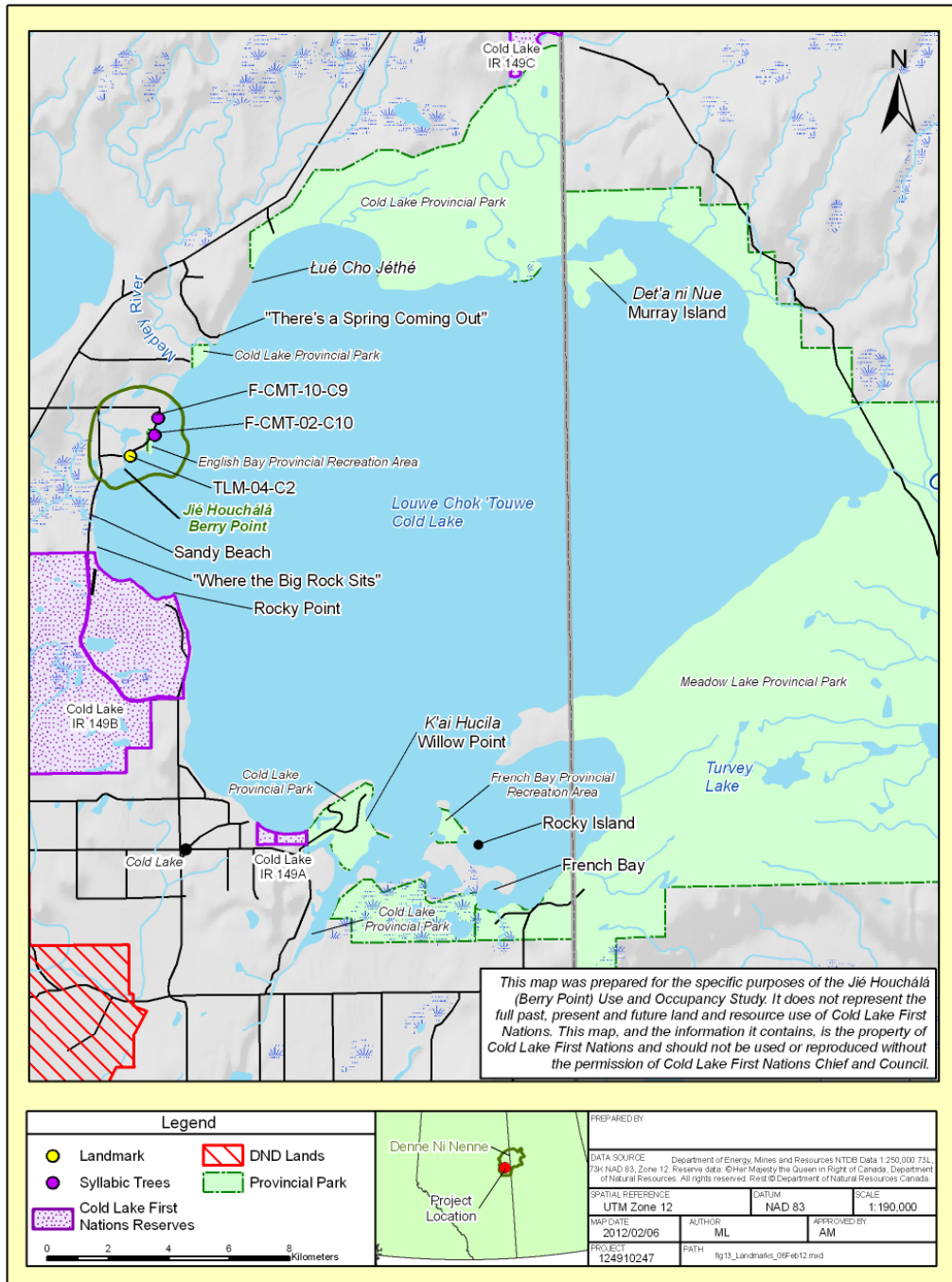
*Denesuline* values and teachings call for respect to be shown in areas where there are burials and deaths. For example, C7 was taught by her grandmother to *"respect the area. Respect. Don't chop any trees around there. Just let the growth be."*

Cold Lake First Nations has long stipulated that burials (known or suspected) within *Denne Ni Nennè* are not to be disturbed. The Nation is also ever mindful of the possibility of burials along trails and wants to ensure that they are not disturbed.

#### **5.4.4 Named Places and Landmarks**

Only passing attention was focused on gathering and recording place name information with respect to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* since place name research is very time consuming. When mentioned in the course of interviews place names were recorded (Figure 5.6).

With respect to Berry Point itself two named places were recorded. One is *Jié Houchálá* which literally means *"Berry Point."* Some individuals also refer to this area as *"Blueberry Point"*. The other place name, *Łué tsá k'è*, refers to the area just to the west of the small bay south of the point. It translates as the *"place to cache fish"*.



**Figure 5.6** **Named Places and Landmarks At and Near *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point***

Beyond *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* a number of other traditional place names were mentioned and have been mapped in relation to existing information on named places (Figure 5.6). These include:

- *Łué Cho Jéthé*, meaning “the place you go to use a hook to ice fish” and referring to a place in the North Bay area where Cold Lake First Nations have used hooks (rather than nets) for fishing since time immemorial (note that mapped location is uncertain).
- *Sandy Beach* (proper Denesuline spelling not available)
- “*Where the Big Rock Sits*” (proper Denesuline spelling not available), which is the name for a spiritual site and landmark at the north end of Sandy Beach. This location includes a grandfather rock, as well as a stone ciecle (which is currently underwater).
- “*There’s a Spring Coming Out*” (proper Denesuline spelling not available), which is the name for a sacred spring just north of the mouth of Medley River.
- *Rocky Island*
- *Rocky Point*

In addition to place names, several landmarks were also mentioned. Landmarks are commonly used as navigational aids, on land and on the water. Although questions about landmarks were not asked during the interviews, two kinds of landmarks were mapped. Other information about landmarks at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* undoubtedly remains unrecorded.

One landmark is a tree used to guide net-setting at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (mapped as TLM-04-C2; Figure 5.6)..

*“[W]hen we set the net it was around here somewhere. There was a spruce tree there. That was our mark... The landmark was a spruce tree. ...To set a net out here. You see? From there you go out here, about 150 yards, 100 yards or so. And that was my dad’s way; we always had landmarks for fishing, all around this lake. And they knew where, not only my dad, but my grandfather” (C2).*

Another landmark mentioned during interviews and field visits was the use of writing on trees to mark the route and passage of travellers, to mark burial places, and to convey other such important information to others coming along behind. This practice was noted to be old and dates to when syllabic writing<sup>11</sup> was still well known and in common use among the *Denesuline*.

*“I knew about those writings, those syllabic writing on the trees because grandma used to tell me stories. Those are significant markings because I think they were for burials or markings of where people are going. But I think it’s for mostly burials or something. It meant something very important... Perfect triangle and a perfect “U”. I’m still trying to figure out what it meant... I used to write that syllabics. I use to write syllabics before I went to white man’s school. Grandma taught me that.” (C10)*

The trees used for recording syllabic markings were poplar and birch: “*They didn’t use spruce trees because the gum covers it. But they marked on poplar and birch*” (C10).

Two trees marked with what participants identified as syllabic writing have been recorded (F-CMT-10-C9 and F-CMT-02-C10; Figure 5.6). F-CMT-02-C10 is within the existing English Bay Recreation Area campground, while F-CMT-10-C9 is to the north, near the multi-family camp location referred to in previous HRIAs (Graham et al. 2006) as the “Grandbois Fish Camp”. F-CMT-02-C10 consists of a birch

---

<sup>11</sup> The missionaries who introduced Christianity also introduced a syllabic writing system that was used to translate the Bible into the Cree and *Denesuline* languages (McCormack 2010: 112-114.)

tree marked with what participants identified as a triangle and a U, while F-CMT-10-C9 consists of a birch marked with what participants identified as the symbol “Λ”.

#### 5.4.5 Prayer/Ceremony/Healing and Peaceful Enjoyment of Place

The peaceful enjoyment of the aesthetics and experience (feeling of connection or peace) of a particular place/life form is part of prayer and thanksgiving and an inspiration for artistic expression. Individuals visit private prayer and healing locales in areas where they can experience solitude and peace and connect with nature and themselves.

Prayer and ceremony are not a necessarily formalized activity and are integrated into all aspects of life on the land. Prayer and spiritual connection often happens simply as a person walks or rests quietly in a place where they sense spiritual energy (C16, personal communication). Prayer takes place concurrently with many harvesting and processing activities. Ceremony can be a simple gesture; for example, an offering of tobacco, a branch placed on the water, or food placed in the fire for the ancestors. Through prayer and offerings, thanks is given to the Creator for the gifts of the land and to the plant or animal that is harvested.

*“...even me, when I cut my fish, that is why I have a smoke, to offer because I got it for nothing from the Creator, even when cutting meat, it was given to you, so you light a cigarette for it. You got to pray for that because it had a spirit.” (C10/RM)*

*“...before we eat, even when we go picking berries, even if we make a quick lunch, there is always something either on bread or bannock and you just put what you are eating on it and give it to the fire.” (C13/RM)*

Cold Lake First Nations has identified a pressing need for places *on the land* where families and individuals can heal from the profound impacts of policies and practices focused on assimilation. Staying connected and reconnecting with ancestral places and customary activities within *Denne Ni Nennè* has been identified by Cold Lake First Nations as extremely important in supporting community, family and individual healing.

Besides being a sacred burial ground, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is considered “*an area of very strong spiritual significance*” (C17) and has spiritual qualities that make it suitable for healing, prayer and ceremony and other spiritual practice.

*“[W]hen I say that it’s a spiritual area I mean that this is a healing area that you can go to and feel better and make your connection to the Creator. It lends itself to do that kind of activity, it’s much stronger there. [Interviewer: If you couldn’t go in there to do that, is there any place else you could go to get that same experience?] No.... Like I said, it’s not like any other place so you get a different feeling when you go to a different area, you know? Different ancestors there and so on. It’s not like there’s another point with exactly the same history and biodiversity... and everything. There’s no such thing” (C17).*

Furthermore, when asked how he felt about the plans to expand English Bay Provincial Park, another participant commented:

*“Very bad... Because it’s not the same. It used to be nice in there, camping in there. And everything was live. You feel alive when you went there, like you did in Primrose. It reminds me a lot of the times when we were up in Primrose. That place, because it’s like free land, it’s our land and it’s been Cold Lake’s land ever since I remember. I take it as my land yet, today. I don’t know. It’s a different way for people that has never been raised in this area” (C2).*

No specific prayer, ceremony, or healing locales or activities were reported in the course of these investigations.

Not only do places on the land provide the energy and space for healing and prayer, the natural beauty and aesthetics of *Denne Ni Nenné*, along with *Denesuline* spiritual connections to the land, is a source of inspiration for a number of recognized and emerging Cold Lake First Nations artists who work in various mediums. For example Alex Janvier's expressionist paintings are internationally renowned; his relationship with *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* inspired the print (Blueberry Point) shown on the cover of this report.

#### 5.4.6 Trading Posts

Participant C11, one of the eldest members of Cold Lake First Nations interviewed for this study, aged 92, recalls that there was a Hudson's Bay Trading Post at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

*"Berry Point; it was a store there once... Hudson Bay. There was a Hudson Bay man, an Indian at the store there once. I remember that. English Bay, Bay there. The big sand right here...English Bay area. It was a store there, Indian had a store there for the Indians. Traveling was kind of hard you know, because there were only dog teams. There wasn't no bus or highways or nothing them days. So they had a store there, I remember that.... Berry Point. English Bay there, you know the big sandbar, the other side. They had a store there... They had it right there at the sandbar.*

The date of the trading post being referred to could not be ascertained by the interviewers. *"That I won't remember, it was quite awhile ago....[I was] young,.. I never bought anything there, but I heard about it and seen it traveling to Primrose... there was only one route, eh?"*

While it is difficult to tell whether this post was at English Bay or *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, or somewhere in between, what is clear is that the post's location is associated with a "big sandbar," a description that can be used to ultimately help determine its location. Due to the uncertainty in location, the trading post was not mapped. No other first-hand information on trading posts or stores was obtained in interviews or community meetings. This would suggest that the trading post predates most study participant's experience. However, it was noted that fur traders regularly came to Cold Lake First Nations camps to purchase furs directly, including the camps at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (C20/RM).

*"The traders would come meet the people when they were coming there [to Berry Point]." (C20/RM)*

Further research at the Hudson's Bay Archives would likely yield more information about the location of the post and the trading activities engaged in.

### 5.5 Harvesting Activities, Locales and Relationships

For as long as Cold Lake First Nations families have lived with *Denne Ni Nenné*, until the creation of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (1952) the required foods and resources of all kinds were in plentiful supply and readily available. Harvesting activities occur on a seasonal basis, in accordance with natural cycles of the particular resource (e.g., berry picking in summer through early fall as various berry crops ripen; moose hunting and fishing in the spring and fall; trapping, hunting, and fishing in the winter; fishing, trapping, egg/waterfowl harvesting in the spring). With the Nation's removal from the lands taken up by the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range harvesting activities were seriously constrained/eliminated (Appendix A). The seasonal land-based harvesting activities which continued to be carried out were restricted to the few remaining areas south of the weapons range, including *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Current harvesting activities are increasingly limited by on-going encroachments (see Section 6.1 and 6.2).

Harvesting, which includes hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering of a multitude of plant, animal and mineral resources, is essential to the culture, identity and well-being of Cold Lake First Nations as a *Denesuline* people. For families and individuals living in deeply tradition-oriented ways, the harvesting of foods and other resources from *Dene Ni Nenne* represents both a means and ends in life. It is a constituent of *right livelihood* and an affirmation of the connection with the land and the ancestors. Harvesting connects individual activity with family and group welfare and, in turn, provides harvesters and processors with a direct experience of the state of resource, animal and plant populations, and the state (quality) of the environment (i.e., *the land/waters*), on a daily, seasonal and annual basis. In this regard, resource harvesting “acts as a connector between environment, communities, human history and family and individual life. It is this integrating role of harvesting that makes it so important to aboriginal communities. This has always been true, but the significance is enhanced in times of rapid social change (Weinstein 1997).

Harvesting activities provide the opportunity to learn, reinforce and transmit traditional ecological knowledge and cultural values. Harvesters take their children or other young apprentices with them to teach them about *Denesuline* harvesting and living skills to pass on knowledge of the land (including specific place-based knowledge). In so doing, *Denesuline* cultural values and identity are taught and reinforced. Processing of the harvest, especially when it takes place out on *the land*, provides a similar opportunity. The making of dry meat or smoked fish are both highly specialized knowledge and culinary art forms which afford similar opportunities.

Through harvesting activities on the land, place based knowledge, and relationships with places of importance, are renewed and transmitted. In the course of carrying out daily or seasonal activities and/or the processing of the harvest, named places are revisited (physically or in memory), ancestral and family stories are told and retold, and new stories emerge. Moreover, through harvesting activities, Cold Lake First Nations’ families are constantly apprised of the state of affairs within *Denne Ni Nenne*. Based on direct observations of what is happening on the land or regarding the state of harvested resources, conclusions are drawn and actions are taken accordingly.

The distribution and sharing of the products of harvesting reinforces traditional values of reciprocity that contribute to community cohesion and resilience. Trade and gifting plays a role in reinforcing cultural ties and networks. These networks of exchange and reciprocity are essential to culture and community resilience: they reinforce cultural identity, offer channels for exchanging cultural knowledge, and provide some security and assurance to individuals who make use of these ties in times of hardship.

As well, traditional food products often are nutritionally superior to their store-bought counterparts. The harvest of traditional foods encourages culturally appropriate activity and exercise, which are important to individual health. Aboriginal communities are known to struggle with diseases such as diabetes, which are linked to a decreased access to traditional foods.

Successful harvesting depends upon **access to a sufficiently large and intact area** uniquely and favourably suited to the resources being harvested and **known and preferred by harvesters**. It is also contingent upon the presence of an **adequate abundance of required/desired resources** to make the effort worthwhile, including the full and diverse suite of species which belong to *Denne Ni Nenne*. All life forms are recognized as having a necessary role in the health of *the people* and the boreal forest ecosystems, within *Denne Ni Nenne*, at both macro and micro levels. Harvesting also depends upon **the quality and safety of the harvested resources**, as evaluated from the viewpoint of the harvester;

and, by extension, **the safety of water, air, and soil** which are the fundamental requirements for all life forms.

Specific harvesting activities that were reported for *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, including maps are reported on here. They include:

- Fishing
- Berry Picking
- Hunting and Trapping
- Gathering and Collection of Medicinal Plants and Other Resources for Healing and Spiritual Practice
- Birch Bark and Sap Collection
- Gathering of Other Resources

To the extent possible, the description of each harvesting activity also includes an explanation of relationships that underlie the value of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, for each activity, as well as relationships among activities. Although separate maps have been prepared for each of the different activities, it is recognized to be an arbitrary construct. Harvesting activities seldom take place as discrete and isolated acts, nor are they considered as such by Cold Lake First Nations study participants. While out for a particular purpose (e.g., berry picking), opportunities that present themselves are taken advantage of (e.g. grouse hunting). Berry picking, large and small game hunting, trapping, fishing and prayer all can, and do, take place simultaneously and/or concurrently. As noted in Section 5.4, harvesting and occupancy activities are interrelated and interdependent.

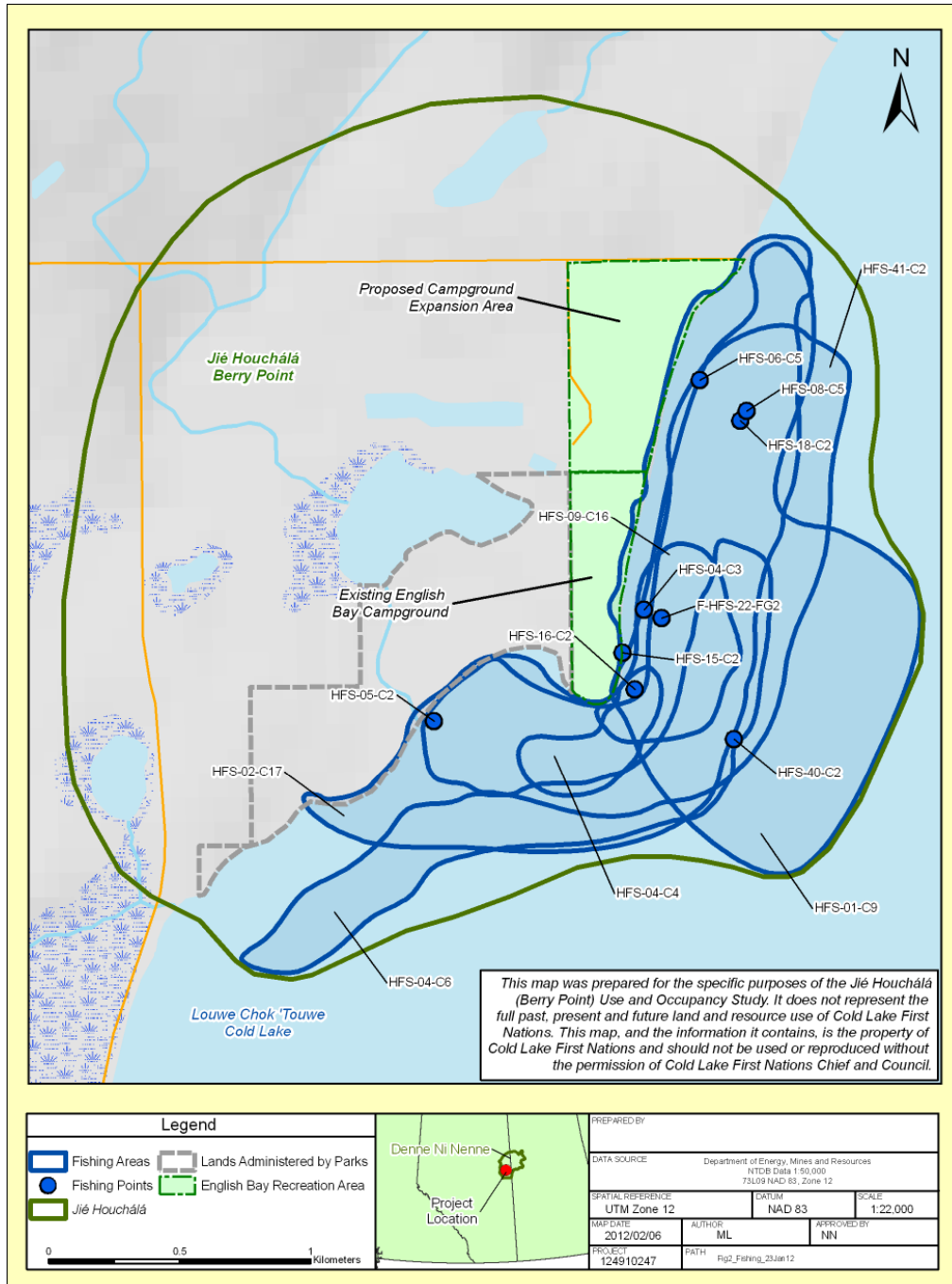
### 5.5.1 Fishing

Fish has always been an economic mainstay in the boreal forest regions and the many productive *fish lakes* within *Denne Ni Nennè* were and are utilized by Cold Lake First Nations. As consistently emphasized by Cold First Nations study participants, fishing at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, was especially productive (past and present), because of a unique combination of features that created an exceptionally good fishing ground for all types of fish – a combination of features not commonly found in other areas of *Łouwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)* or other lakes within *Denne Ni Nennè*.

*“What everyone is talking about, the significance of this area - You can see the shallow water here, and there are places in here where there is really deep water where you can go in there for jack, whitefish. Talking about the land is one part, but using that land was getting to the water and the migration of the fish and the spawning and the warmth. The people came here for the fish – in other areas, the fishing is not there. Everyone knows that you set the net where the fish are. Off of this point it is shallow for a ways, but then really deep. The whole stretch here is where there is good fishing” (C9 November 1 scoping session, 2011).*

*“[I]n the springtime there it’s like one of the great fishing spots I have ever known. As soon as the ice recedes there you catch nothing but straight whitefish out there. I’ve been using it for a long time” (C4).*

*“Well it was a traditional thing to go there this time of year to gather fish for the winter and make dried fish” (C6).*



**Figure 5.7 Fishing Locations Mapped in Jié Houchálá/Berry Point**



During interviews for this investigation, fifteen fishing locations were mapped within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, as depicted on Figure 5.7 and detailed in Table 5.3. Many of these locations were mapped by active fishermen. As described in the methodology for this investigation (Section 3.0) only locations which informants had first-hand experience of were mapped. The information provided here does not represent the *entirety* of Cold Lake First Nations use of the *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* fishing grounds. It is likely that there are more members of the Nation who are harvesting fish in this area than have been interviewed.

**Table 5.3 Fishing Locations Mapped in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point***

#	Site and Informant Code	Description
1	HFS-05-C2	Set nets off of the landmark at TLM-04-C2; whitefish during November
2	HFS-15-C2	The late Alec Charland's fishing grounds; <i>"we fished a lot around there, where that water comes out."</i>
3	HFS-16-C2	Later season fishing grounds where water is deeper, good around Christmas time
4	HFS-18-C2	Summer (in July) fishing in deep water (approximately 200 feet deep)
5	HFS-40-C2	100 yards from the shore, it's deep water, about 150 feet, you catch fish there in July. <i>"It's always good fishing around that area"</i>
6	HFS-41-C2	Fishing grounds at Berry Point; time of last activity mid-October 2011, caught about 30 whites and about 27 trout
7	HFS-04-C3	Boniface Andrew's fishing grounds
8	HFS-04-C4	There is a drop-off in the lake right here and in the springtime, as soon as the ice recedes, the whitefish are all in this area. Net fishing in the spring for whitefish. <i>"I can set my net there and drop a net in there and not even 20 minutes after I drop my net there I can sidewind my net and have five or six whitefish freshly caught."</i>
9	HFS-06-C5	Whitefish fishing in spring and fall, date of last activity in 2010 and years previous ( <i>"The last time I went out and did that was last year, because of [other business to attend to], but last year and all the other years prior to it we did our fish."</i> ); <i>"We set our nets out in the deep there; refer back to the drop off there – out past the sand bars there's a drop off there."</i>
10	HFS-08-C5	Whitefish fishing; date of last activity November 2011
11	HFS-04-C6	Net fishing area; <i>"There's a drop off, all along here. Kind of a ravine I guess it's called. All along there, and all around the bay."</i>
12	HFS-01-C9	Net fishing area; trout, whitefish ( <i>"right from the point, it's very deep right off of that point, And all the way along that bank where it's shallow the water temperature in the spring and in the fall is different between the deep water and the cold water. That's why it's a special place for fishing at certain times of the year. Whether you are after lake trout, pickerel, whitefish – those are the three main ones that I go</i>

		<i>for.”); time of last activity July 2011: “I was there in the spring, I was there until July 2011 and then I will always be fishing there and everywhere on the lake.”</i>
13	HFS-09-C16	Parent’s fishing area
14	HFS02-C17	General year-found fishing; net and rod fishing for whitefish, trout, pickerel, black mariah, suckers and jackfish. Date of last activity, fall 2011
15	F-HFS-22-FG2	Current net fishing 100 yards out from the current boat launch; date of last activity fall 2011

*Note: “Date of last activity” refers to the most recent use of the location at the time of the interview and does not indicate that the area will not be used again in the future.*

As can be seen in the description for the fishing locations in Table 5.3, Cold Lake study participants hold a wealth of detailed traditional ecological knowledge about *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* with respect to fishing. The usual harvesting method is net fishing, although some members fish by rod. Net fishing can take place in any season (subject to safety of ice or water conditions) and nets may be left unattended for a period of time. A variety of species of fish are harvested, including lake whitefish, lake trout<sup>12</sup>, pickerel or walleye, black mariah or burbot, jackfish or northern pike, and suckers. Along with the variety of fish that are caught there, there are several features which make *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* especially significant for Cold Lake First Nations.

According to traditional ecological knowledge shared by participants, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a whitefish spawning grounds in late fall, especially in the small shallow bay just to the south of the point (C2 November 1, 2011 Scoping Session). Since *time immemorial* the whitefish spawning season has been an important net fishing time for Cold Lake First Nations fishermen/women who carry very detailed traditional knowledge about the movements of whitefish during this time. According to one informant who has been fishing for seven decades, (including commercial fishing) “*you have to catch them where they are already spawning... That’s the way the fish works. They go according to how they spawn*” (C3). He further explained how the whitefish move in a clockwise direction around the lake: “*They usually move this way along the lake; they usually go this way. I don’t know why. They go down this way. This is north and this is south....I don’t know why [they go clockwise]; they seem to go this way. Everything seems to work this way. With the sun, I don’t know why it is. Maybe it was meant that way*” (C3).

According to Cold Lake First Nations traditional ecological knowledge holders, there is a temporal and spatial pattern to whitefish spawning, with whitefish spawning sites moving around the lake in a clockwise direction over space and time. Another experienced Cold Lake First Nations fisherman, well known to other Cold Lake First Nations members for his expertise<sup>13</sup>, explained this pattern. According to C2, the whitefish begin spawning at French Bay (on the south side of Cold Lake) usually around October 10, although the particular date can vary. The spawning at French Bay lasts around five days, during which time net fishing can be incredibly productive, although the catch has declined over the years.

---

<sup>12</sup> Cold Lake First Nations fishermen report that lake trout which are stocked are not the same as the native species

<sup>13</sup> “*I was a fisherman, my dad was a fisherman*” (C2, November 1, 2011 scoping session),

*"We'd set one net; all it would take is one net. If you hit them right you can go in there and set a net ... and you'll catch 20-30 whitefish within 10 minutes. That's when you hit it right on.... Used to be, that was years ago. Not anymore". [From French Bay] "they travel... they seem to go around." In about four days' time they are spawning at a new location (mapped as EFS-09-C2). From there, they move to EFS10-C2 where "they seem to hang out on the point, in the bay" after which time "they'll be coming around this bay until our Treaty grounds" by about November 10 to 15 (EFS11-C2). By the end of November, the whitefish reach *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (EFS14-C2; Figure X). At the end of November, the whitefish move into deeper water, where they can still be caught, especially around late December (C2). Figure 5.8 depicts the movement of whitefish spawning around the west shore of Cold Lake.*

The little bay at the south end of Berry Point is shallow, which is what provides spawning habitat for the whitefish. When asked what makes an area good for whitefish spawning, participant C2 replied that the areas *"are shallow; this is shallow around here. All this bay is pretty shallow, maybe 7-8 feet, 10 feet some places."*

Besides the whitefish spawning grounds (which can be seen in aerial photographs as sand bars along the shoreline) and late fall fishing, there is also a drop off, an area of deep water, relatively close to the shore, which is a good area to fish particularly in the summer when fish seek deeper, cooler water. Participants described how fish move closer into shore (shallower waters) in the fall, and in the summertime they move into deeper cooler waters.

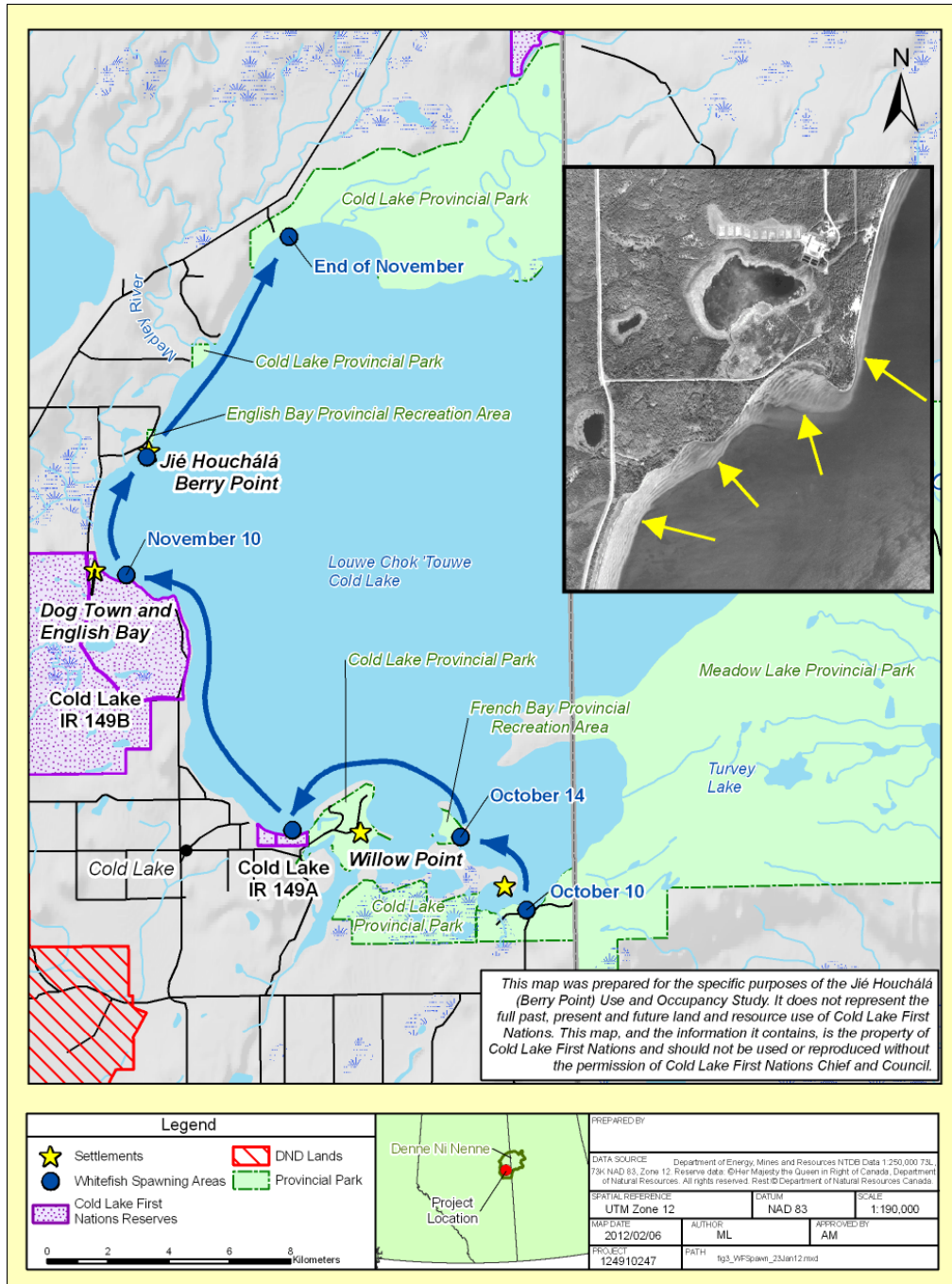
*There's a drop off, all along here. Kind of a ravine I guess it's called. All along there, and all around the bay... [T]he thing is, the fish moved around... it seemed like the fall time like it is now, the fish would come in. And the summertime where it's cold they'd go out" (C6).*

This combination of the sandbars and deep water makes *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* a productive area for fishing throughout the year.

*"It's very deep right off of that point, and all the way along that bank where it's shallow the water temperature in the spring and in the fall is different between the deep water and the cold water. That's why it's a special place for fishing at certain times of the year. Whether you are after lake trout, pickerel, whitefish" (C9).*

There is also a period in the springtime as the ice recedes when the fishing is especially productive.

*"You see how the drop off is right here? In the springtime the fish are all in this area right here. All the whitefish are all in this area. I can set my net there and drop a net in there and not even 20 minutes after I drop my net there I can side-wind my net and have five or six whitefish freshly caught.... You usually drop your net and it's called sidewinding your net. So you are going along with your boat and pulling the float line and as you are sidewinding your net, you will see fish getting caught. Instead of waiting overnight you can just pull up that fish and start cooking as he's flopping. That's the best time. You can't get any fresher than that... Right when the ice recedes, it usually starts on the east side of the lake in May....you can see a little bit of water, right around this side of the lake. And every day you can see more and more and more water to the east. When it gets to a certain point – there was ice like this that is all gathered up like that. We went over here and brought our nets out and we started setting here.... As soon as the ice receded to that point there, we were just catching like crazy. That's the best time."* (C4)



**Figure 5.8 Whitefish Spawning around Cold Lake (note relationship to Cold Lake First Nations traditional settlements)**

During the November 4, 2011 field visit, one of the participants related that he had been frequently setting nets at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, approximately 100 yards out from the current boat launch (F-HFS-22-FG2). As of November 4, 2011, he had caught over 300 fish (trout, whitefish, jackfish, mariah, pickerel and suckers) over a period of one week. According to this participant, nearly all of the fish caught had been distributed to other Cold Lake First Nations members. During the November 1 guiding group meeting, he brought in a portion of his catch of lake trout, which were cleaned and cooked up by the women for a community lunch. As well, many of the whitefish caught by him were being filleted and prepared as dry fish, a traditional and well-loved *Denesuline* delicacy, by participant C10 for later distribution to Cold Lake First Nations Elders (an act that supports traditional values of sharing, as well as community cohesion).

Historically, the fall whitefish spawning period, which coincided with Cold Lake First Nations members seasonal move back to *Ah 'Tue (Primrose Lake)* and the northern trapping grounds, was the cause for intensive fishing and fish processing, supported by a seasonal fishing settlement, at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Nearly all participants, especially those of fifty years of age or older (i.e. those with direct experience and memories of the pre-Cold Lake Air Weapons Range ways of life, spoke about the use of the *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* for fishing, with some speaking about how they had once fished at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (e.g., C7, C15) and others relating how the area was an important fall fishing grounds and fall fishing camp in their younger years (e.g., C14, C8, C13).

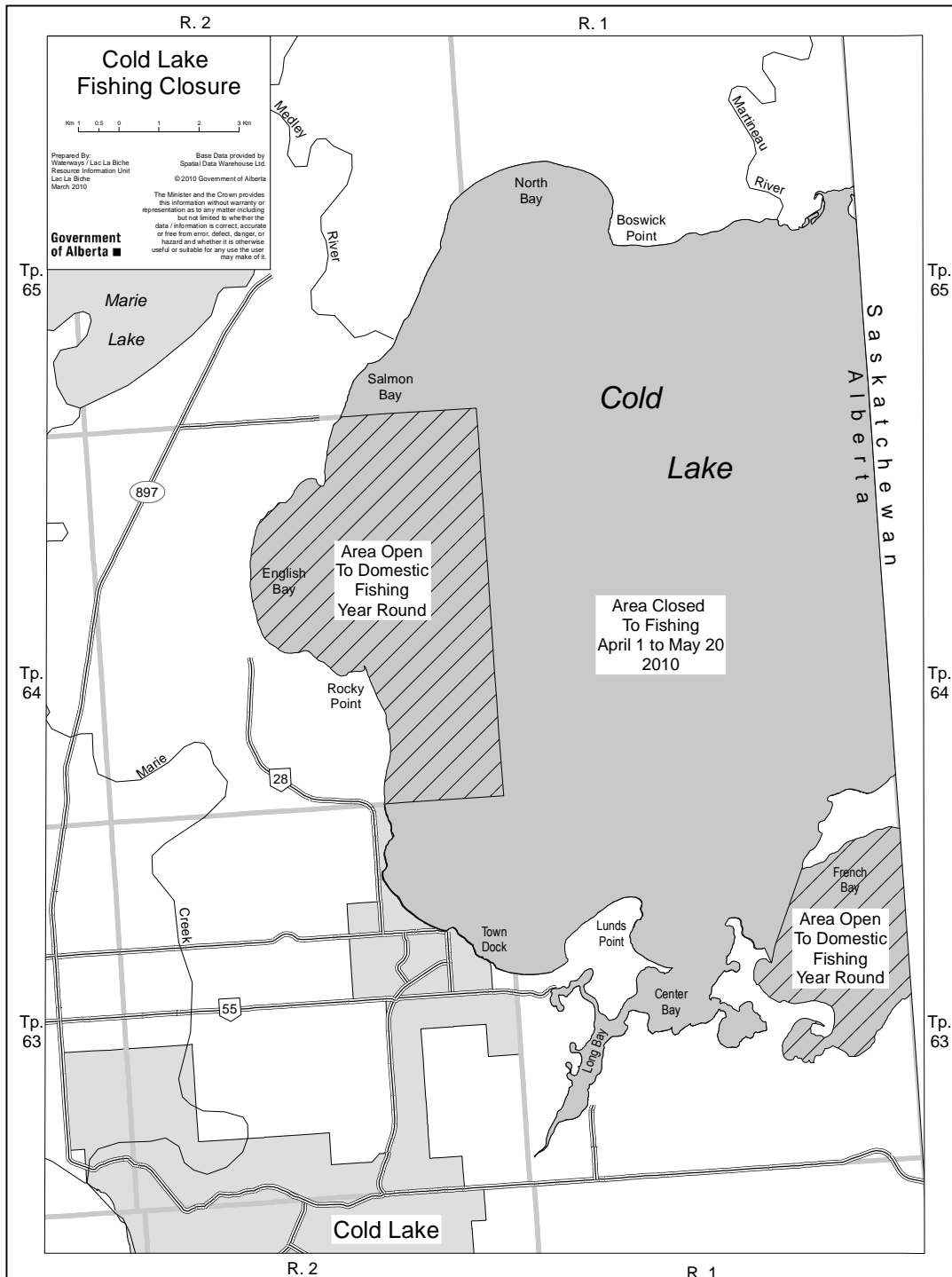
In particular, participants spoke about the unique way of preserving late fall fish and highly associate that preservation method with *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

*"In the fall, in the summer, it was all used, this whole area, for fishing. In the fall they were drying them. They would dry them, they didn't open the fish, they put a stick right through the tail and they hung them up. The whole fish, they would dry them like that. It was preserved like that"* (C7).

*"You stick fish through the tail and call them Be k'ah chine?a . You dry it, you hang them upside down.* (C10)

*"They hang them; they put ten. They take a stick...and they pin the fish on the tail and the back, all the way. They don't gut them or anything, but they make a little hole near the heart or something and they bleed them. The blood runs out; that's how they do it. Then they freeze like that and then they put them away like that. That's what they were doing when they were here."* (C2).

The value of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* for harvesting and processing fish, both past and present, is not only a function of the unique characteristics of the area (presence of sandbars and deep areas in close proximity; whitefish spawning; multiple fish species available), but also the location along the *Primrose Trail* (Section 5.4.2) and the proximity of the place to occupied Cold Lake First Nations reserve lands, in particular I.R. 149B English Bay (see Section 5.6). The use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* for harvesting and processing fish, both past and present, is supported by a number of other activities, most especially camping on the land (Section 5.4.1).



**Figure 5.9 Seasonal Cold Lake Fishing Closure (Map Courtesy of ASRD)**

*Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is also unique in that it continues to provide for Cold Lake First Nations during a time when access to fish, an important traditional resource, is becoming more difficult as a result of declining fish stocks, the drying up of waterbodies, barriers to access of areas as a result of industrial, municipal and Provincial park development, restrictions on fishing, concerns about contamination of fish, and increasing recreational use of the lake. These encroachments and impacts are detailed in Section 6.0. While almost all lakes and rivers in *Denne Ni Nennè* had abundant fish stocks prior to the mid- to late 1950s, Cold Lake First Nations harvesters report that most lakes and rivers no longer have the productive fish stocks that were once available to community members. Water levels today are reportedly much lower than 1952 levels, a factor which is believed to account for some of the decreases in fish populations. Commercial over-fishing by non-Aboriginal license holders, changes introduced by hydro carbon extraction projects, fishing regulations and the influx of newcomers to the region (sports fishers and boaters), however, are believed to have most significantly affected fish stocks.

Also important is that the fishing areas associated with *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* are included within one of the two areas that remain open to Cold Lake First Nations domestic fishing during the annual seasonal closure of Cold Lake to fishing between April 1 and May 15 (Figure 5.9).

### 5.5.2 Berry Picking

Besides fishing, berry-picking is one of the primary uses reported at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. It is an important food gathering activity for Cold Lake First Nations members. Over the course of the summer and fall, berries are gathered according to the particular season for each berry type. The variety and abundance of berries to be found is reflected in the place name, “Berry Point”. The area is reported to be especially rich in blueberries and bog cranberries, along with other types of berries (e.g., raspberries, Saskatoons, gooseberries, lowbush and highbush cranberries). The harvest is eaten fresh, canned, dried, frozen, or made into jams.

Twenty-four berry-picking locales were mapped among eleven of the participants within the berry picking complex associated with *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (Table 5.4; Figure 5.10). While many of these locations overlap, the mapping reflects the extent of Berry Picking at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* both spatially and among participants. Of the six participants who did not map berry picking locales most mentioned the berry picking at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (C1, C2, C11, C10) and the immediate area (C14).

**Table 5.4 Berry-picking Locations Mapped in, and contiguous to, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point***

#	Site Code	Description
<i>Within Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i>		
1	HBP-03-C8	Blueberry picking near small lake
2	HBP-04-C8	Cranberry picking
3	HBP-04-C17	Berry picking area for blueberry, cranberry (high and low bush), Saskatoon, pin cherry
4	HBP-05-C17	Berry picking area for blueberry, cranberry,

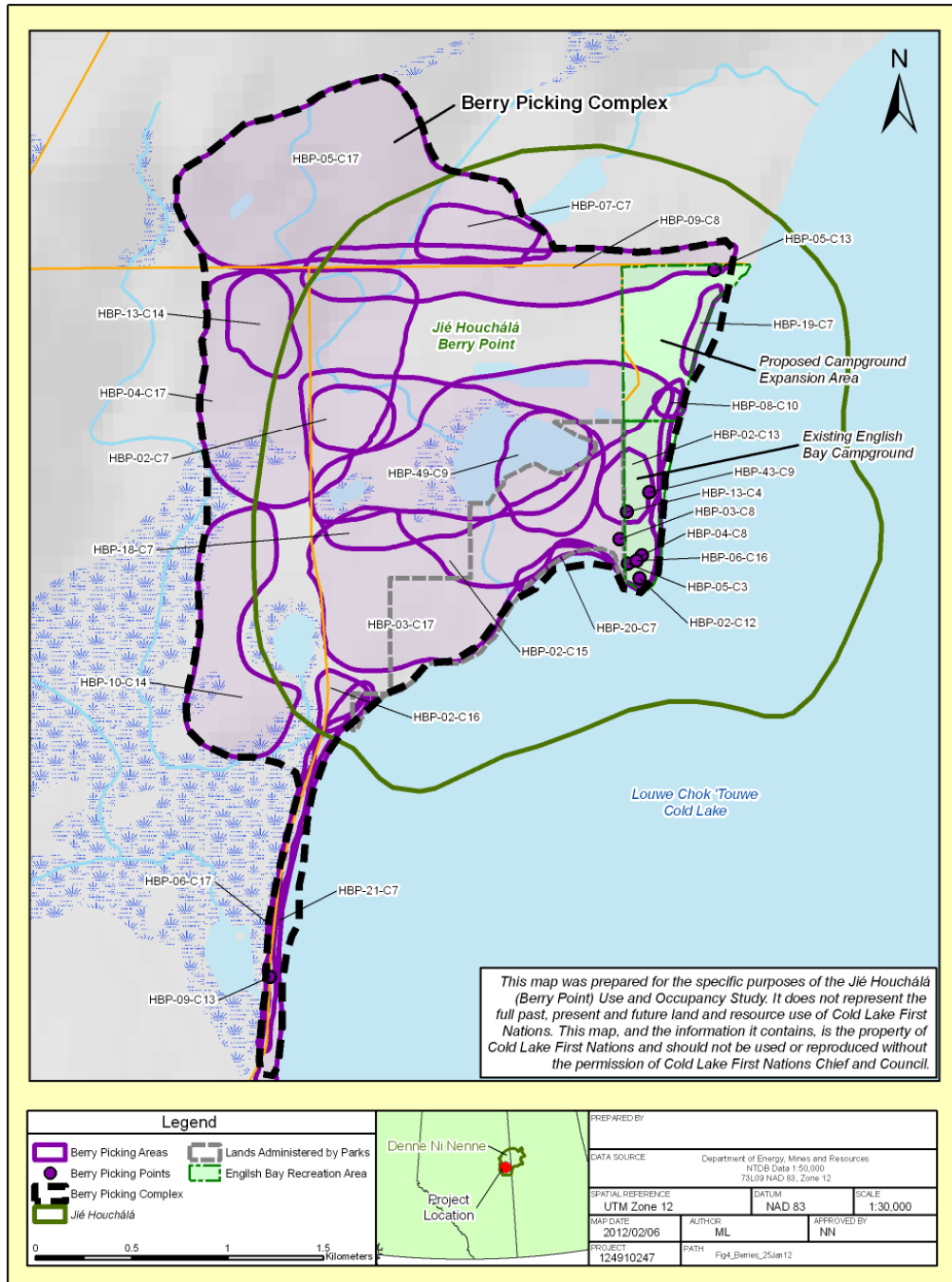
Cold Lake First Nations *Jié Houchálá (Berry Point)* Traditional Land Use and Occupancy  
 Section 5: *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Traditional Use and Occupancy

---

		Saskatoon
5	HBP-02-C7	Blueberries and cranberries; last used summer 2011 (no berries this year)
6	HBP-07-C7	Blueberry picking in sandy jackpine area north of fish hatchery
7	HBP-18-C7	Cranberries
8	HBP-20-C7	Saskatoon picking
9	HBP-49-C9	Berry picking in this area prior to the fish hatchery being constructed
10	HBP-43-C9	Used to be good berry picking
11	HBP-05-C13	Raspberry picking
12	HBP-02-C13	Blueberry and cranberry picking
13	HBP-03-C17	Berry picking for blueberry, high and low bush cranberry, raspberry, strawberry, gooseberry, Saskatoon, "boysenberry", and pincherry. Time of last use, late summer 2011.
14	HBP-02-C15	Berry picking – saskatoons and raspberries
15	HBP-05-C3	Berry picking
16	HBP-02-C12	Blueberry picking
17	HBP-13-C4	Berry picking, raspberries
18	HBP-06-C16	Blueberry picking
19	HBP-10-C14	Blueberry and cranberry picking
20	HBP-02-C16	Blueberry and cranberry picking
<i>Outside of Jié Houchálá/Berry Point but within the associated berry picking complex</i>		
21	HBP-06-C17	Berry picking area
22	HBP-09-C13	Saskatoon picking
23	HBP-21-C7	Saskatoon berry picking
24	HBP-13-C14	Blueberry picking; 1950s

*Note: "Date of last activity" refers to the most recent use of the location at the time of the interview and does not indicate that the area will not be used again in the future.*





**Figure 5.10 Berry-picking Locations Mapped in, and contiguous to, Jié Houchálá/Berry Point**

Berry-picking occurs at the point and in the area to the west of the current campground, especially in and around the small lakes to the west of the campground and south of the fish hatchery.

*“There’s just certain places. It’s not berries all over. The most important one is the one I showed you, right in here (referring to HBP-02-C13). That’s the most – that where all the berries are in here. From Berry Point all the way to here; that was the berry patch and birch bark” (C13).*

*“Over here on this side, (to the west) there is a road on the other side of this lake. We picked berries; we’d go in right along here. And from here this way, [between the two small lakes] that’s where we set snares ....there’s a little road going in there, a little trail. You can drive in there and until this summer [2011] I went there” (C7).*

In the past (during the childhood of many participants over the age of 50), berry-picking was not only a subsistence activity, but, when it came to blueberries, also a commercial activity, both of which contributed to the overall livelihood. Cold Lake First Nations depended upon the rich blueberry patches to harvest enough to sell for grocery money (for staples such as flour and lard) as well as enough for personal use through the winter.

*“In summer time, when everyone had picked enough; picking the berries and cached them away, canned and dried their berries, my grandmother used to make birch bark baskets and she used to sell them to Clark’s store. She needed money for something else like lard or baking powder. They traded for berries. A lot families picked a lot of berries for trade in those stores. And in turn they sold those berries” (C16).*

The value of blueberries as a commodity was so high that, unlike most traditional foods, they were not shared amongst the people. As was explained:

*“They shared their food, they used to leave a tea pail. My grandmother put the pail upside down and put 14 bags under there. That was part of the sharing, leaving for the next person to come when they make camp. They shared their fish. But blueberries, they were stingy of it, because they used to go sell it for 10 cents a pound. If it was 30 pounds, it was \$3.00, you could get a bunch of groceries. They made just enough for lard, sugar, flour, baking powder. Other than that they canned them and stored them away.” (C13)*

Berries are no longer harvested for commercial purposes, but continue to be an important domestic staple and a traditional food of high value.

During the childhood of many of the participants (over the age of 50 years old), berry-picking would be supported by camps, as people would travel to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* specifically to pick berries. For example:

*“I used to go there with my grandmother Veronica and Mary, and there was an old man that used to come and pick my grandmother and me to pick berries with them, Ben Grandbois was his name. They used to pick us up and we would go up to Berry Point. We would stay there for about 2-3 days because the old man used to leave us there and he used to go on a horse to go look for berries on this side [to the west of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*], in the bush. In the meantime these two old ladies used to make birch baskets; that was to put berries in there after they’d picked berries. They used to make about 3 or 4 each. And then from there, when the old man came back, he used to hitch up the horse and he’d take us – by that time he’d found a place for us to pitch up tents wherever. And from there he’d tell us where the berries were and that’s where we used to live. And that wasn’t very far from Blueberry Point.” (C13)*

At these late summer camps, berry picking often would occur in conjunction with fishing activities.

*“The old boys fished; they smoked fish and the old girls we’d go picking berries. I used to go picking berries with my grandfather and my grandmother; right around here we’d pick berries all over here”* (C2).

As explained in the fishing section (Section 5.5.1), fishing is good year round at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and is not restricted to the whitefish spawning season.

Study participants also mentioned the Doyle family in relation to berry-picking. It seems that there were good berries around the Doyle property, especially raspberries.

*“That old lady [Mrs. Doyle] was cheap of her berries. That’s all I remember about her. Real cheap. She had this dog; there’s raspberries all along her house like this here. And right out behind there were crab-apple trees. Oh they were delicious. You couldn’t even go near; you weren’t even allowed to grab anything. Even if I went like this [sneaking] to grab raspberries... that stupid dog [imitating dog barking]. That old lady would be standing at the door. ‘Get the hell outta here.’”* (C10).

While Mrs. Doyle seems to have been able to prevent Cold Lake First Nations members from picking from her personal raspberry patch, she was not able to affect the harvesting of berry resources in the area more generally.

*“There was a Mrs. Doyle, she lived there... she used to complain about us Natives collecting berries around her area. But still we just went ahead because she was all by herself, so we didn’t listen to her. They were going to go to waste anyway so we just picked”* (C8).

In more recent years, berry-picking is often a day-trip activity. The use of motorized vehicles to access berry-picking locations (as opposed to the use of horses) has decreased travel time immensely, making it unnecessary to camp and allowing for people to integrate berry-picking into busy schedules (jobs, school schedules for children, etc.). Berry-picking outings provide opportunities for other activities, such as rabbit snaring or grouse hunting (see Section 5.5.3), as well as the introduction of children to traditional life ways and culture.

*“My mother and I used to be always down there. My sister and I, my younger sister, we’d be going... In about ‘07, before my little sister passed away in ‘08... [W]e’d pick berries there. My sister had a little boy, and my grandkids would come; we’d take them all and go and show them how we cook the fish and stuff like that. They’d eat with us like... you know. We showed them there at the Berry Point at the park there”* (C8).

Based on mapped berry-picking information, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is part of a larger area where berry picking occurs close to English Bay 149B (Figure 5.10); however, it is recognized as one of the main, most important, areas for berry picking

The larger berry picking area surrounding and contiguous to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* includes Sandy Beach, an area that was once was known for abundant Saskatoon berries, but the use of which has been impacted by recreational use for parties.

### **5.5.3 Hunting and Trapping**

Cold Lake First Nations families were almost completely severed from ancestral trapping areas/traplines and hunting areas as a result of the creation of Cold Lake Air Weapons Range in 1952 (Appendix A).

With the expulsion from Primrose Lake, one of the impacts to Cold Lake First Nations was that there were no other lands available which would support the Nations' economy, based on trapping as the primary livelihood, supplemented by commercial fishing, logging, and subsistence farming. Because the lands in the vicinity of Cold Lake had already been slated for municipal and agricultural use, with many areas already taken up by settlers and other trappers, there were no lands available for new Cold Lake First Nations traplines.

While hunting and trapping lands were severely decreased with the creation of the weapons range, the long-standing and productive *summer and all-harvesting lands* south of the range afforded an abundance of large and small game for the Nations' families. Staple subsistence game includes, but is not limited to, moose (preferred and highly valued), deer (very common but less preferred), upland birds (e.g., grouse spp.), waterfowl (spring and fall), and rabbits, with fish as a mainstay.

Moose and small game hunting occurs at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, which falls within a larger zone that is well known to be productive moose hunting grounds. Hunting may be incidental to other activities (e.g., harvesting grouse or rabbits while berry-picking; provisioning a fish camp with fresh moose meat), or it may occur for its own sake. Dispatching moose and small game currently is usually accomplished with a firearm; however, for rabbits and grouse snaring techniques are commonly used. Some small-scale trapping (squirrel snaring and marten trapping) reportedly also has occurred there. Trapping activities are likely under-represented due to past experiences with the enforcement of fish and wildlife regulations. For the purposes of this study trapping and hunting locations are dealt with collectively.

In total, twenty-seven locations related to hunting and trapping within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* were mapped in interviews and during the field visits (Table 5.5, Figure 5.11). Most of the hunting sites are for moose or rabbits, and the use of the area to procure those two species was mentioned frequently.

*"When we use these areas around these lakes [the lakes west of the campground, south of the fish hatchery] too, we use that for rabbits, moose, in this area. When people were camped along the lake, men used to hunt further... Around this little lake; around these little lakes here and anywhere in here was where people did their rabbits... this year [2011], just a couple months ago we were in here snaring rabbits" (C5).*

*"We used to hunt around here in the summer time; in July, towards the end of July. The moose go in the water during that month. It's easy to spot them when they are in water" (C7).*

**Table 5.5 - Hunting and Trapping Locations Mapped in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point***

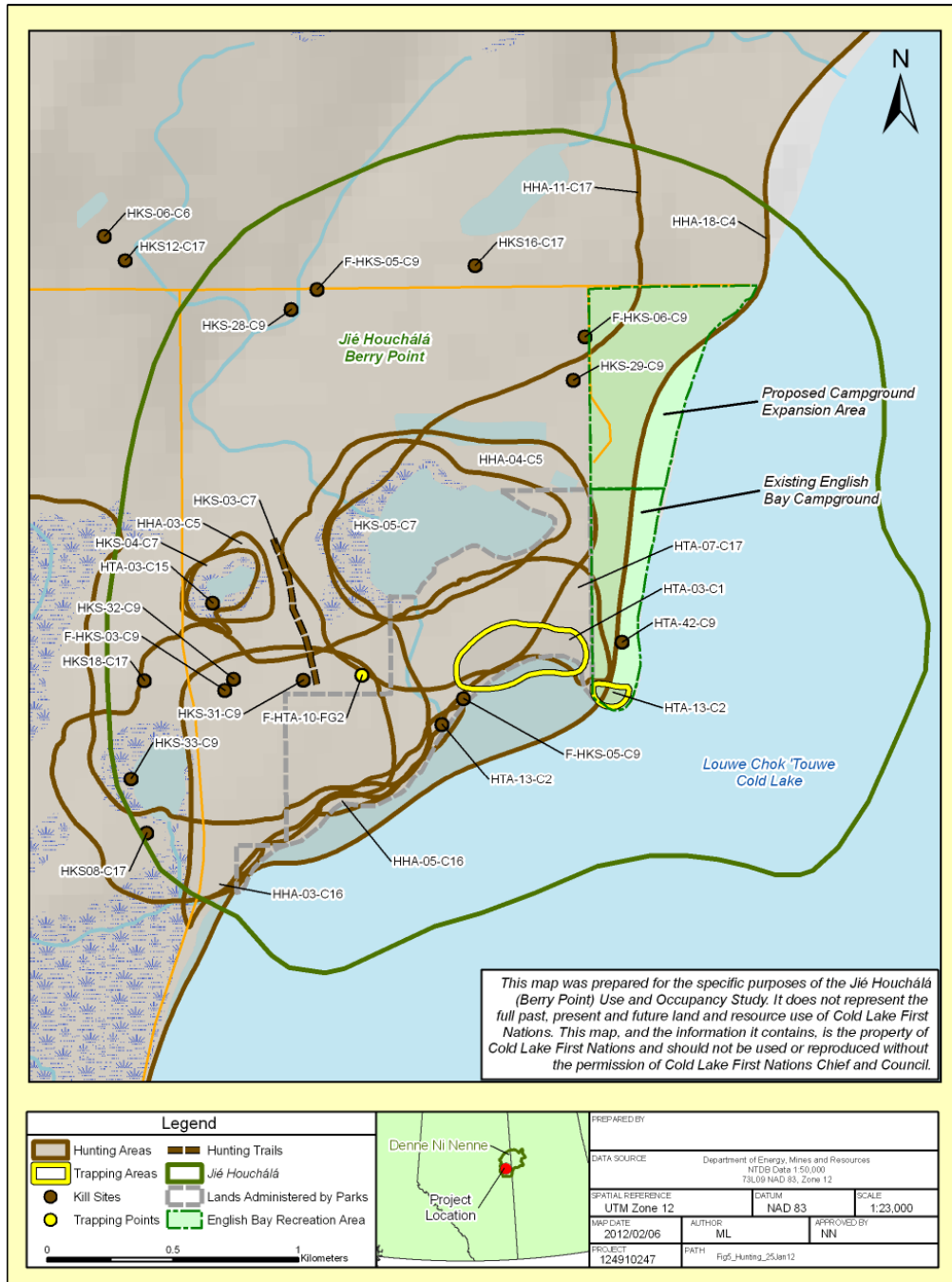
#	Site and Participant Code	Description
1	HTA-03-C1	C1's grandmother's trapping area
2	HTA-13-C2	Trapped mink around the camp
3	HHA-18-C4	" <i>Moose Alley</i> " – moose hunting area
4	HHA-03-C5	Area for hunting moose and rabbits; used last year (2010)
5	HHA-04-C5	Hunting area for moose and rabbits

Cold Lake First Nations *Jié Houchálá (Berry Point)* Traditional Land Use and Occupancy  
Section 5: *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Traditional Use and Occupancy

---

6	HKS-03-C7	Rabbit snaring trail; Last time was “ <i>once they put the gate on, that was 2000-something</i> ”
7	HTA-42-C9	Rabbit snaring in the late 1970s, early 1980s
8	HHA-03-C16	Rabbit snaring
9	HHA-05-C16	Grouse hunting along lake
10	HHA-11-C17	Prime moose hunting area; lots of feed and lots of habitat for moose; high probability of moose kill here
11	HTA-07-C17	Rabbit snaring area; rabbits are snared year –round except springtime; date of last use at time of interview was winter 2010
12	F-HTA-10-FG2	Two old snare poles against a spruce tree with a large squirrel midden around it. Three wire snares on one of the poles. No more than 20 years old.
13	F-HKS-05-C9	C9 shot a moose near here; C9 and C4 say this is a good road to hunt moose on.
14	F-HKS-06-C9	C9 shot a moose just east off of the road into the fish hatchery shortly after it was built. The water pipeline that goes north of the plant site just north of the fish hatchery is also used for hunting moose.
15	F-HKS-03-C9	Shot a cow and calf moose to the north of the road in 1979 or 1980
16	F-HKS-05-C9	C9’s dad shot a moose near the creek, they cut up the meat and took some back to town and the rest was taken to Morris Janvier’s camp at <i>Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i> .
17	HKS-04-C7	Moose hunting area at small lake south of fish hatchery
18	HKS-05-C7	Moose hunting area at lake south of fish hatchery
19	HKS-28-C9	Moose kill, 1980s
20	HKS-16-C17	Moose kill, fall 2009
21	HKS-29-C9	Moose kill
22	HKS08-C17	Grouse kill, fall 2011
23	HKS-33-C9	Moose kill
24	HKS-31-C9	Moose kill
25	HKS-18-C17	Moose kill, summer 2010
26	HKS-32-C9	Moose kill on access road into park
27	HTA-03-C15	Rabbit snaring

*Note: “Date of last activity” refers to the most recent use of the location at the time of the interview and does not indicate that the area will not be used again in the future.*



**Figure 5.11** Hunting and Trapping Locations Mapped in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*

Rabbit snaring often occurs in relation to berry picking. For example, participant C9 recounts:

*“There’s a trail that goes down along the lake [to the west of the campground]. We have gone in there and set some snares while the girls are out picking berries. And that’s when [my son] was just a baby [in the late 1970s] and that’s all we lived on was rabbits because we didn’t have money for groceries and eating whatnot. We were there picking berries and medicines and whatnot.... That boat launch is about here. And from that boat launch there’s a trail, just in this area. It was close by. I didn’t want to walk very far when he was just a small guy. I just did it close by.”*

Rabbit snares continue to be set at *Jié Houchálá/Berry* (C17). Upland game birds (grouse) are also commonly hunted in the area.

*“[We] used to hunt those chickens – grouse - all over the place, up in the north over there at Berry Point. Rabbits and chickens... Right along the road, especially they used to sit on willows along the lake when there was lots [of grouse]. You could take a long pole, stick a wire on it, and towards the evening, you go out there and hook them up on their heads and pull them down. That was our traditional way of getting those chickens. Everybody did that”* (C16).

Grouse generally are hunted opportunistically as participant C17 explains: *“Chicken hunting can be that whole Berry Point area.... Anywhere in the territories we hunt chickens.... It’s just a matter of when you run into them, you know? Mostly in the fall time. The last chicken taken was “this past fall”.*

Trapping at *Jié Houchálá/Berry* was mentioned by three of the study participants. As explained by participant C16:

*“the old folks used to snare squirrels. Around these area; all the areas where there was spruce areas. That’s all where they snare the squirrels.... They used to sell the furs. Of course the tails were used to make paintbrushes. That’s what they were bought for.”*

Tangible remains of squirrel snaring, consisting of snare poles and snares, were identified during the field visit to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* on November 5, 2011 (F-HTA-10-FG2). Snare poles consist of a long pole of wood that is leaned up against a tree (usually spruce) in an area with abundant squirrel sign (usually a large squirrel “midden<sup>14</sup>”). A snare pole has wire snares attached to catch squirrels as run up and down the pole, between the tree and the ground. The snare pole was identified while the field team was searching for the remains of an old trail that goes to one of the small lakes that is west of the current English Bay Park campground. None of the participants on the field visit was aware of the snare pole location prior to that day, although they are familiar with snaring squirrels.

Angelique Janvier, 93 years of age, the eldest member of Cold Lake First Nations interviewed for this project recounted that her grandmother (Cecile Janvier) trapped weasels, muskrats and squirrels at *Jié Houchálá/ Berry Point*. It was a common practice for *Denesuline* women to run their own small traplines close to the camp and homesites. The direct contributions of women to the trapping economy are not often recognized; however, participant C2 recounted the following story:

*“It wasn’t a man that caught a silver fox; it was the old lady that stayed home, looking after her grandchildren. He’d [fox] made a little noise, and they’d take the slop pail and throw it outside, you know? So the fox would go there and try to find something to eat. And that’s the old lady; she’d hear that and right away know it’s a fox. So she’d go and set a trap. In half an hour or so, she’d have a silver*

---

<sup>14</sup> a place where squirrels live, store cones, and deposit waste from shelling cones

*fox right there. My father used to say that it wasn't a man that caught that fox, it was the old ladies that stayed home with their grandchildren and the old ladies stayed with their kids.... and the silver fox was worth a lot of money in those days. Five thousand maybe. Three thousand, five thousand.*

C2 also recounted that trapping would take place during the fall fish camp at least as late as the 1970s.

*"And even there when we stayed there, some guys are catching some fur in there; we were all trappers. All around, any place here. Around the river, the creek and then the mink would come there to the camp. Weasel, squirrel, we'd catch them... mink came to our camp and now you've got to trap them."*

(C2)

#### **5.5.4 Gathering and Collection of Medicinal Plants and Other Resources for Healing and Spiritual Practice**

Medicinal plants (roots and rhizomes, bark, leaves, berries, stems, flowers, seeds, and other parts depending on the particular plant and medicinal use) are collected and used. Many other "medicines" and resources besides plants are used for healing and spiritual practice, including the crafting of tools and objects that support ceremony; the spirits and presence of the ancestors; animals and parts and objects derived thereof; sacred (holy) water, special stones, and minerals.

*Denesuline* medicines, healing and other spiritual traditions continue to be significant for Cold Lake First Nations members, in spite of missionary and residential school efforts to eradicate them.

Within Cold Lake First Nations "everyone is different in their beliefs and understandings" (C7).

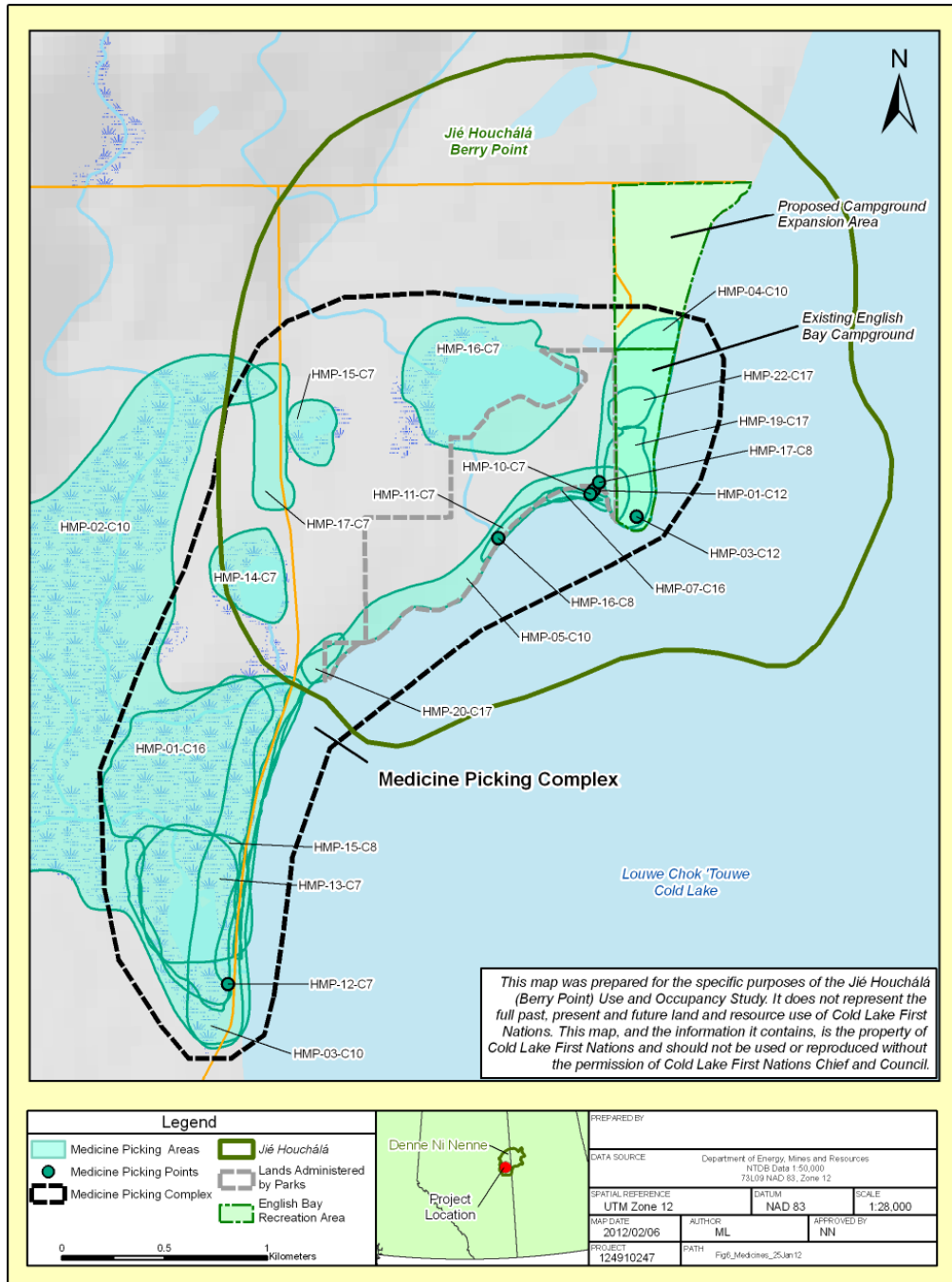
*"I totally believe in the native way, the medicines and everything; what I stand for. That's why I'm so adamant that I fight for this.... There's even cancer medicine from there [Berry Point]. Heart medicine from there. I got heart medicine... it grows there [Berry Point], all along there" (C10).*

*"[T]he old ladies and the women they knew medicine, Indian medicine... Aspirin, Tylenol, you don't need Tylenol. Even me, I don't believe in that. I believe in Indian medicine even today... And then when we were sick, the old ladies would put a chair over and put a rock over there to heat it up.... They put you on top, you sweat like hell, they throw you in bed and cover you right up. And they would give you a little opening and they would give you medicine; you'd drink medicine. And then they would slowly open you up; that was so you would sweat. In the morning you're back out there running around. A brand new kid again. That's how we were." (C2).*

Based on interviews and mapping, medicinal plant collection at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is important to tradition-oriented members of Cold Lake First Nations and is part of a larger medicine plant-gathering complex that extends from Berry Point proper to the fen just to the south (Figure 5.12). When asked about medicinal plant collection at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, participants would mention locales within this larger area.

Sixteen medicinal plant collection areas within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and six sites outside of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, but within the associated medicinal plant picking area, were mapped during interviews (Table 5.7). This complex in its entirety represents a diversity of types of terrain and vegetation, which is why there is such a rich variety of medicinal plants in close proximity.





**Figure 5.12 Medicinal plant collection locations Mapped in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and Immediate Area**

**Table 5.7 - Medicinal plant collection locations Mapped in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and Immediate Area**

#	Site Code	Description
<i>Within Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i>		
1	HMP-10-C7	Spruce gum, last picked summer 2010
2	HMP-11-C7	Ratroot
3	HMP-15-C7	Mint
4	HMP-16-C7	Mint
5	HMP-17-C7	Yarrow; last picked summer 2011
6	HMP-17-C8	Medicines: Spruce, tamarack, Labrador tea
7	HMP-16-C8	Ratroot
8	HMP-05-C10	Mint tea picking
9	HMP-04-C10	Various medicines (heart medicine; cancer medicine)
10	HMP-03-C12	Labrador tea and kinnikinnick
11	HMP-01-C12	Rat root picking in the bay west of Berry Point
12	HMP-07-C16	Ratroot
13	HMP-19-C17	Labrador tea; summer 2011 last picked
14	HMP-22-C17	Spruce gum; last picked spring 2011
15	HMP-14-C7	Mint
16	HMP-20-C17	Tamarack collection; date of last collection at time of interview was 2009
<i>Within Larger Medicinal Plant Picking Complex Contiguous with Jié Houchálá/Berry Point</i>		
17	HMP-02-C10	Pitcher plant picking
18	HMP-01-C16	Pitcher plant picking
19	HMP-15-C8	Balsam, pitcher plants, tamarack, wild mint picking
20	HMP-13-C7	Pitcher plant and mint picking. Date of last harvest at time of interview, September 2011.
21	HMP-12-C7	Rat-root picking
22	HMP-03-C10	Labrador (muskeg) tea picking

*Note: "Date of last activity" refers to the most recent use of the location at the time of the interview and does not indicate that the area will not be used again in the future.*

Medicines that study participants identified as being harvested in this area include: Labrador tea, rat root, tamarack, spruce gum, mint, kinnikinnick, black spruce cones, birch sap, yarrow, pitcher plants, baneberries, sage, and medicines for heart disease and cancer (particular plant names not disclosed due to concerns about misappropriation of knowledge). It is likely that this list is not exhaustive, representing only what participants were comfortable sharing, or what they were able to recall during the interviews.

Besides the medicine plants reported to have been harvested, there are many other medicines that were identified, for example jackpine cones, puffball, balsam fir, and scouring rush. Participants emphasized that in the *Denesuline* world view, “*everything*” is a medicine:

*“In fact, everything that’s in there, that’s a medicine and food. Everything in there. Everything is like this... one without the other there’s nothing. That’s what I’ve been trying to say all along. Nobody will listen. Without one, the other, there’s nothing. That’s why I’m fighting for it. Everything is a medicine. Everything!”* (C10).

This medicinal plant gathering complex is significant in that it includes nearly all of the most important medicines (including those that are commonly and frequently used (i.e. staples), such as Labrador tea, mint and rat root), as well as those that are of more specialty use for treating particular diseases (e.g., baneberry) and/or are difficult to find or access (e.g., pitcher plants); and because of its proximity and accessibility to Cold Lake First Nations members. For example, participant C10 noted the presence of medicines for treating heart disease and cancer at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Participant C12 shared the following:

*“I pick a certain medicine... it’s the best medicine you would want to have.... Baneberry, that’s the one. Good medicine.”*

Pitcher plants are another significant medicinal plant that is available in this larger complex.

*“South of where the [English Bay] Park is where we picked pitcher plants with my grandmother. Oh, [this place has been used] forever and ever.... All that area there’s a lot of pitcher plants. That’s where I go every summer.... And they are tricky stuff to find when you don’t know... We don’t over pick, just enough for the winter needs. This is where I showed a lot of people where there is some.”* (C16)

Pitcher plants are a particularly significant traditional medicine that are generally hard to find and to access. The fen within this medicinal plant complex contains not only pitcher plants, but also tamarack and mint.

Medicinal plant picking does not occur just anywhere a particular plant may be found. Suitable areas for the harvesting of medicines are those that are considered “pure.” For example, as participant C10 explains:

*“I go where it’s pure. How my grandmother taught me.”* When asked how that affects how she decides where to pick, she answered: *“Because I know where it’s pure... You know it’s pure. You can see it, you don’t see no dogs around, you don’t see people running around pissing all over the place, or doing this and doing that; chopping trees, spitting. You know: where it’s pure. Where the breeze and the rain, whatever makes it... you know, our Mother Earth makes it grow. Where it’s pure. I sure as hell know that any dog turd that had medicine growing outside in their yard, if there’s 4000 white people naked, running around there, laying on the medicine, I don’t think so! You know what I mean?”* (C10).

The concept of *medicine* for *Denesuline* peoples is far more encompassing than the use of medicinal plants. For example, white quartz stones, sand, and the auspicious sightings of birds and animals, for example, are also considered to be *medicine*.

*Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a source of white quartz which can be found scattered about on the existing *Primrose Trail* and other surface exposures, and which is one of the material types for artifacts found during archaeological investigations.

*“Even rocks, white crystal rocks, that’s a healing rock. Auntie [name has] a lot of healing rocks. You don’t find them just anywhere, those rocks. All these I picked from over there.” (C10)*

*“Even the sand [is a medicine], grandma used to take from there and put it in canvas bags. She’d heat the sand up in the frying pan and she’d put the hot sand in that bag and she’d use it as a heating pad. Because there was no running water” (C10).*

In describing the medicines that can be found at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, participant C4 spoke about the presence of osprey and related what was considered to a spiritual experience.

*“There is lots of medicines and stuff like that you can take from there. There are osprey nests there. Those are rare birds to be seeing, especially in our area.”*

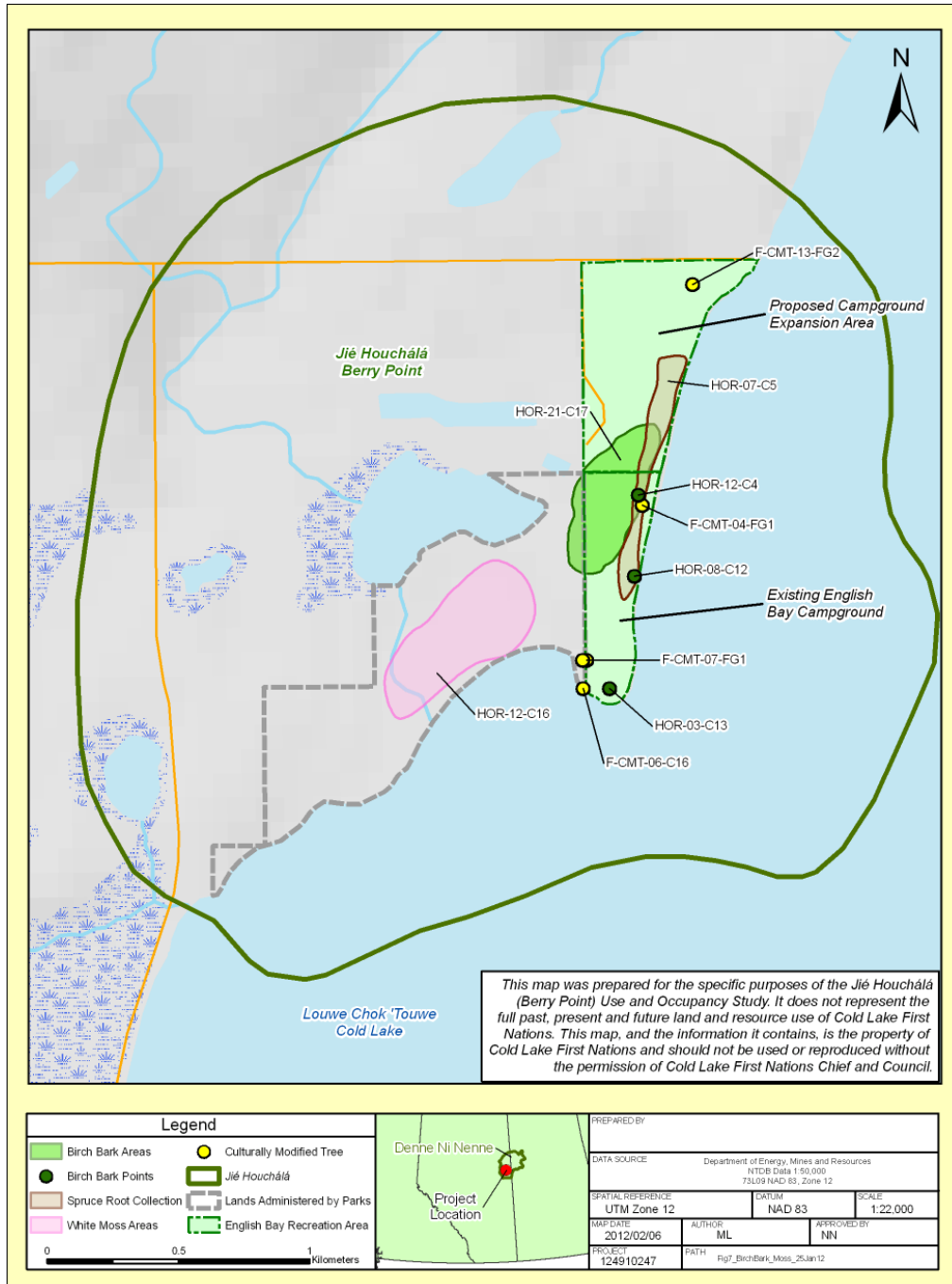
### **5.5.5 Birch Bark and Sap Collection**

Birch is a particularly useful tree in the northern boreal forest. *Denesutline* peoples, including Cold Lake First Nations, have relied on birch trees to provide them with bark, wood and sap for a number of domestic and subsistence uses. Birch bark, which strips easily off of the tree in season, can be harvested without killing the tree. Perhaps the most well-known use of birch bark is for the hulls of birch bark canoes and for making watertight baskets. Birch bark baskets are traditionally used for a number of purposes, including berry picking and storage. Birch bark is also used to construct moose callers, a conical implement used to imitate the sounds that moose make during their rutting season. The moose caller is a technology used by *Denesutline* hunters to attract moose.

Birch wood has special properties that make it especially useful for the construction of snowshoes and sled runners; it is strong and highly resilient to stress and, when steamed and heated, can be bent into the shapes required for curving implements. The sap of birch is collected in the spring and boiled down to make syrup (similar to sugar maple sap for maple syrup). It is also used medicinally, along with other parts of the birch tree.

Cold Lake First Nations members report that *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is known for its abundance of birch, which has been used in the past and present for bark and sap collection. Five birch bark collection locales were mapped during interviews (Table 5.8; Figure 5.14).

Participant C5 reports that, within the last five years *“I’ve picked birch bark (to make containers) in here [Jié Houchálá/Berry Point] for years. I make little things out of it; I’m a craftsperson. I used to do all that kind of stuff.”* Participant C12 reports that she picks birch bark for basket making in the existing English Bay Park campground area (site code HOR-08-C12).



**Figure 5.14** Birch Bark and Sap, White Moss and Spruce Root Collection Locations Mapped in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*

**Table 5.8 Birch Bark Collection Locales Mapped in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point***

#	Site/Participant Code	Description
1	HOR-21-C17	Birch bark collection for moose calls; last collected there in 2007
2	HOR-07-C5	Birch bark and spruce root collection
3	HOR-08-C12	Birch bark collection
4	HOR-03-C13	Birch bark collection for baskets
5	HOR-12-C4	Good birch bark collecting through Park

*Note: "Date of last activity" refers to the most recent use of the location at the time of the interview and does not indicate that the area will not be used again in the future.*

Additional information about the use of birch bark and sap was discussed but not necessarily mapped. For example, participant C10 spoke about a large ridge (now destroyed) upon which birch sap and bark collection used to occur. During the November 5, 2011 field visit, participant C16 mentioned that birch sap was collected all along Sandy Beach (just to the south of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and that she used to help her grandmother collect it. With regards to birch bark collection, participant C16 also recounted that:

*"Birch bark is another one that people gathered and my grandmother used to cut birch bark. Not too many, enough to make baskets and make us toys."*

Participant C16'S grandmother sold birch bark baskets of blueberries at Clark's General Store in Cold Lake for grocery money. Participant C2 also spoke about the use of birch bark for berry picking baskets at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

*"So right there we'd do berries.... They didn't have any jars in those days. You know what they used? ... Birch bark. All birch bark. They'd make birch bark baskets that big... About a foot wide and that high... All of those ladies could pretty well all make them. The old boys they would help the old ladies. They'd get in the muskeg and get that roots [spruce roots] that they would use to make those baskets. They would put the berries in those baskets; that's how they did it.... There's birch right around here; all over back in here [HOR-25-C2]. The old boys would cut the birch for the girls... Oh yeah, the old boys were there to help the women you know. They didn't let them do everything alone.... I was there myself; that's how I know this."*

There are many birch with bark-stripping scars (culturally modified trees, "CMTs") present throughout *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, as can be expected considering the long-standing use of the area (Figure 5.14; Photos 5.20-5.21). While not all CMTs encountered during field visits were recorded, it is interesting to note that many of those that were are within or close to the mapped birch bark collection locales (Figure 5.14). The stories shared by Cold Lake First Nations members indicate that Cold Lake First Nations collection and use of birch bark at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* has occurred during the lifetimes of the participants.

## 5.5.6 Gathering of Other Resources

The collection of a number of other kinds of traditional resources was mentioned during interviews for this study. These resources include diaper moss, spruce roots, driftwood, and stones and rocks for domestic uses.

### 5.5.6.1 White Moss

*White moss*, also known as “*diaper moss*”, was a particularly important domestic resource in recent historic times. A type of sphagnum moss that grows in the muskeg, it is highly absorbent when dry. It was used to diaper babies, for women’s needs and for cleaning. Moss was picked in the summer time.

*“[It] was useful for everything in the camp. To wipe out their fry pans, to clean stuff. It was all used for cleaning”* (C16). *“Even out here to get the moss. You know, for the moss bags<sup>15</sup>... They put piles and piles of it; they would hang it to dry wherever they are. They would hang it on trees and when think it’s dry then they’d come back and collect it all.... All the bugs get out of there when it dries up; then it’s ready for use”* (C7).

*“In the summer, the men would go in the bush and pick moss. They hang it up on trees to dry... the men would put it on the trees for the women, whoever had their babies.*

Although the use of *white moss* was discontinued starting in the 1960s (C16) it continues to be an important reminder of *Denesuline* complete self-sufficiency and ability to survive with the *gifts* provided by *the land*. One moss picking location in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* was mapped (HOR-12-C16) (Figure 5.14).

### 5.5.6.2 Spruce Roots

The collection of spruce roots at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* for basket making was mentioned in various interviews (C5; C2; C12); only one location was mapped (HOR-07-C5; Figure 5.14).

### 5.5.6.3 Driftwood

The collection of driftwood along the *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* shoreline for firewood and for art work is reported. There is a special kind of driftwood called *t’sa dane*:

*“In Denesuline, this is called t’sa dane. T’sa dane means ‘beaver chewings’. [E]very time we went by the lake... I was always asked to go for this [by my grandmother] because once it’s dry, then you cook with it. You’d make coals with it, because spruce trees... makes your food black. There’s nothing [to make your food black] in here [in the piece of t’sa dane], it comes from the lake. And we used it as wood. It’ll burn when it rains, because once it dries up, it doesn’t get wet inside. This is solid... [I]t’s light. But you cut it. Man you can make beautiful things with this.”* (C10)

### 5.5.6.4 Stones

Stones that are reported to have been used in the past as tools for sharpening knives and for making pemmican (a traditional high energy food made of pounded dry meat, berries and fat) have also been collected at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (collection locations not mapped). Participant C10 has found what

---

<sup>15</sup> *Moss bags* are a type of swaddling for babies in which moss is used to absorb the baby’s waste and provide insulation.

she has identified as “*crusher*” rocks that were used for crushing berries and a stone for honing knives based on what her grandmother taught her.

“*Look at that, you can tell that it’s been scraped, coloured. And this was with it. Look at how smooth it is.... I found it right where that boat is too [by the boat launch at the English Bay Provincial Park campground]. Right by that - medicine. That’s where I found it. This rock - it’s for crushing berries.... And this kind of rock is a file.... Everything I’m telling you, my grandmother taught me....Everything, every 9 yards*” (C10).

### 5.5.7 Water

Water, the sacred life source for all living things, is a matter integrally connected to harvesting. Without clean water there is no life and/or no harvestable resources or no resources safe to harvest. For this reason the protection of the waters within *Denne Ni Nennè* is of paramount importance to Cold Lake First Nations study participants, most particularly, the waters of *Louwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)*. As reported by Cold Lake First Nations members, fish from *Louwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)* is currently the mainstay of the Nation’s traditional food resources since cumulative impacts to accessible fishing lakes have resulted in decreased and/or *contaminated* fish stocks.

Water harvesting locales have not been specifically recorded as part of this study, with the exception of springs, which are also considered to be sacred (See Section 4.2.1) and essential to the health of *Louwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)*.

Spring locations, within or in close proximity to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* are recorded on Figure 5.15.

## 5.6 The Unique Nature of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*

Based on information reported in interviews, a number of characteristics combine to make *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* a uniquely significant area for Cold Lake First Nations’ traditional land use and occupancy

- It is a place of unusual abundance and diversity of resources, particularly fish and berries.
- It is very close to occupied reserve lands (IRC 149B).
- It is one of several “living on the land gathering places” in *Denne Ni Nennè* outside of CLAWR, and the only one that is still relatively accessible for Cold Lake First Nations use.
- Ancestral occupation has continued for thousands of years down to the present, an aspect of particular significance to Cold Lake First Nations.
- It has a rare combination of spiritual qualities that result in a high spiritual significance.

These characteristics result in a place that is of particular value not only for Cold Lake First Nations harvesting and occupancy activities, but also for other related cultural practices, such as the teaching and transmission of traditional knowledge.

*Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a mosaic of ecological diversity, with, for example, wetlands, lakeshore, Cold Lake, sandbars and deep water, a sheltered bay, sandy jackpine areas, and birch groves all being present. This mosaic creates a number of “edges”, i.e., the boundaries or transitions from one ecosystem to another, which are of particular value for indigenous peoples due to their high levels of biodiversity (Turner, Davidson-Hunt and O’Flaherty 2003). Such areas provide increased access to important resources and allow for greater flexibility and resilience (Turner, Davidson-Hunt and O’Flaherty). It is this principle that is evident in Cold Lake First Nations recognition of the importance of *Berry Point*.



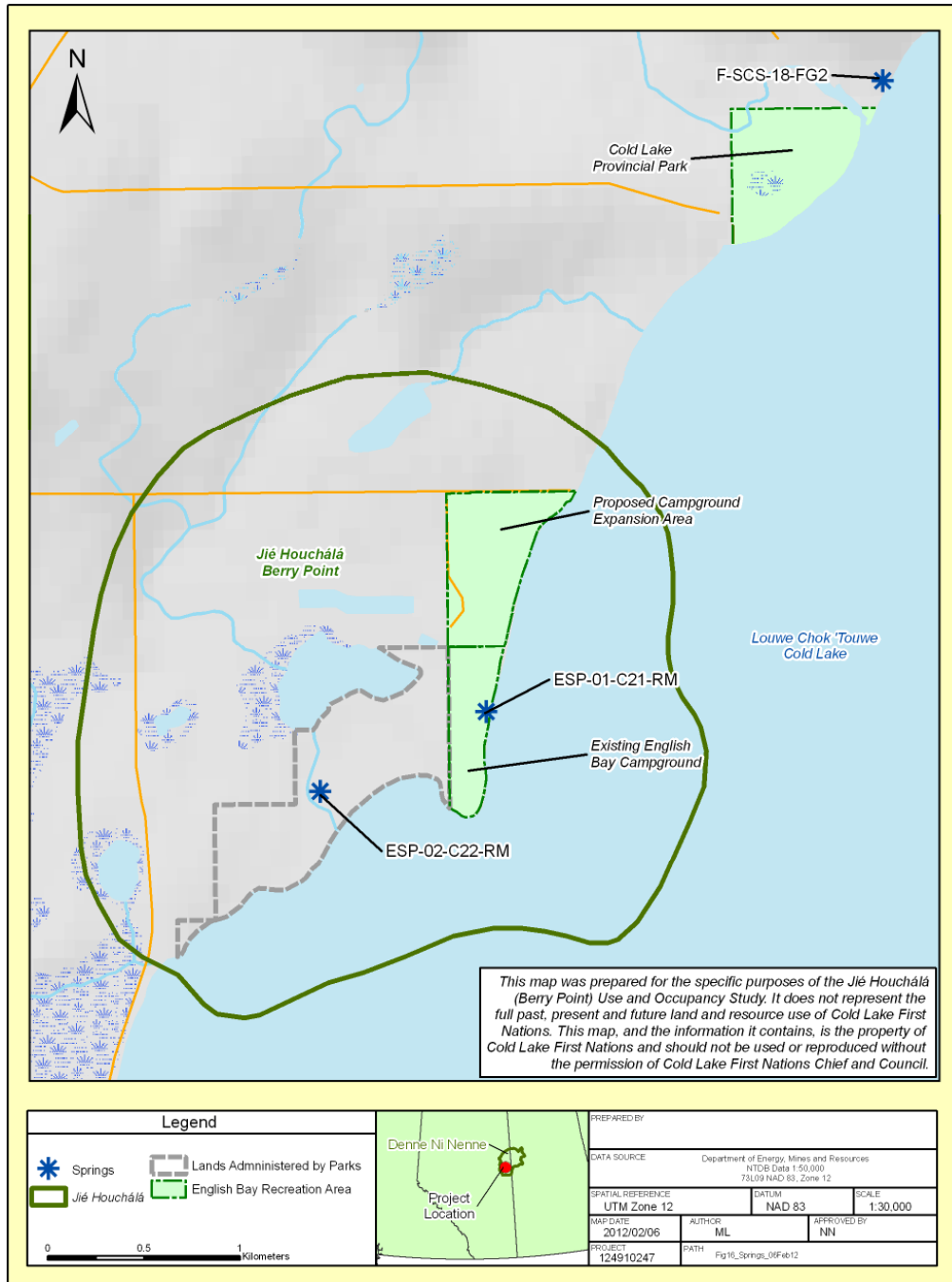


Figure 5.15 Springs Mapped at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*

*“Well for Berry Point there’s a very strong biodiversity there, and multi-use harvesting, ... that is unlike any other place in Cold Lake. It’s a major cache, a major food source area.” (C17)*

Different areas, or zones, within the spatial extent of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* are associated with different types of resource procurement (hunting, berry picking, medicinal plants, fishing, other resources) and have more, or less, value for habitation (seasonal settlement / camps).

The diverse resources available in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* include a unique diversity of berry types (saskatoons, blueberries, cranberries, and raspberries, to name a few), access to large and small game, a variety of medicines, birch bark and sap, and a multitude of fishing species. As described in Section 5.5.1, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is very productive for fishing because the area combines deep and shallow water (which plays into summer and fall fishing) and whitefish spawning grounds.

These available “resources” include not only animals and plants, but also characteristics that make this area attractive for camps. The sheltered shallow bay (in the “Point and Bay Camp Complex Area”) is one such characteristic (C12). In addition, the beach and sandbars (shallow water) make this place suitable for swimming and thus a good area to bring children. The aesthetics and feel of the place lend themselves to peaceful enjoyment and connection with nature. Finally, it is a place that is well known to Cold Lake First Nations member by virtue of the long association and occupation of the place. As explained, people take their children to those places where they, as children, were taken to camp (C22/R).

The richness of the resources available combined with the fact that it is an attractive area for camps makes it especially good for not only harvesting but also processing fish on the land. Simply put, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a “*living on the land*” place that has everything required in sufficient abundance to support *the people*.

*“...if a person wanted to get away from it all and go and spend a couple of days with Elders that was the place. That’s where they all went because there was an abundance of food. They had the lake; they had whatever they needed. Plus they had the privacy of the wilderness.” (C5)*

As described in Section 5.3, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, there are only a few “*living on the land*” places in *Denne Ni Nennè*. Of these, three (*Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* included) are outside of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range. Of those, two (*K’ai Hucila/Willow Point* and French Bay) have been cut off from the full extent of Cold Lake First Nations use (Section 4.3.4).

This area is of long-standing use and has historical value to the Nation as well.

*“...it’s along our main Primrose highway, which is very significant to us. So it has a time-immemorial significance to our people and we want to keep it going for more and more thousands of years, you know; to protect it as much as we can.” (C17)*

Cold Lake First Nations considers all archaeological resources within *Denne Ni Nennè* to be their rightful legacy as the descendent community of ancestral peoples occupying these lands. The archaeological sites investigated at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* are considered by Cold Lake First Nations to be significant to their history as evidence of long term and continuous occupancy of the place. Furthermore, as described in Section 5.4.2 all Cold Lake First Nations clans and families used *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* travelling to Primrose and beyond. It was a crossroads and meeting place where the main trails of *Denne Ni Nennè* branched out to neighbouring *Denesuline* communities. It is the repository of the stories of families, individuals and the Cold Lake First Nations community. There are a number of burials, associated with Primrose Trail, known to be present within and nearby.

*Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is also of strong spiritual value (Section 5.4.5). It is a place to go connect with the land. The presence of medicines and the spiritual qualities of place have a reciprocal, reinforcing relationship. The burials there bring the presence of the ancestors.

*It's the connection to the land that's very important to us, very important to me to have these areas to go to. When you pick medicines from a certain area and they're more like a spiritual area or a traditional area, this area has a very high spiritual value. It makes the medicine stronger, and also when we go there, you know in the summer, it's very relaxing and good for your health. You feel the connection to the land, and the lake, and to your ancestors that are there.*

The proximity to occupied Cold Lake First Nations reserve lands (in particular IR 149B) is particularly advantageous as well, helping to minimize the time it can otherwise take to access harvesting locations and making the place more accessible to Cold Lake First Nations members.

*"... it's [Berry Point] nearby where I live, so that's one of the main advantages. It doesn't take as much time and effort to get there and harvest." (C17)*

*"... that place, because of its proximity and the closeness to our community, that place more so than most because we were able to access that place very easily. It didn't take days or hours for us to get there. So we spent a lot of our time there when we were younger. We interacted with the Elders; a lot of the Elders would get away from the Reserve and be back out on their land to get away from some of the social ills that happened... Berry Point was always a place where you would find Elders ... So it was a dear place; it still is." (C5)*

The close proximity is important for those who are integrating traditional activities into busy schedules involving work commitments and their children's school and activity schedules. It also means that Cold Lake First Nations members residing on IRC 149B and that do not have vehicles, can access the area by foot as it is within walking distance (e.g., C10). Without a vehicle, accessibility to harvesting locales in *Denne Ni Nennè* is severely diminished and so places within walking distance to Cold Lake First Nations communities are particularly important.

The combination of harvesting and occupancy resources, historical and cultural value, and proximity makes the place of especial value for cultural gatherings and for teaching children *Denesuline* traditional knowledge, values, culture and lifeways.

*Also it's a good area to... for people to get together and share and promote the culture, and you know, to pass on the teachings." (C17)*

*"This past fall in fact, I took Luke with me [to Berry Point], my grandson and picked [medicines]. And I tell them things. Trying to get him a little bit of knowledge about medicines... It's better to take him right to the site where they go, that way they know exactly where to go because they don't grow all over." (C12)*

*"[I take my children to Berry Point because] it's important for them to learn the cultural ways and to know this area... in the... it's still very pristine in some ways. It's very important to their culture and their well being." (C17)*

*"Every summer, all the young kids used to go there, put up tents and stay the whole week. These young women they would let them do arts and crafts and do nature walks; show them how to fish, scaling fish and different stuff. They are trying to teach them." (C16)*

*"My oldest daughter... she is now 12, and she can set her own net. When she goes and gets the net she can pull any kind of fish out of the nets without hurting herself, without getting bitten. As soon as we get off the lake she's the first one to start scaling or skinning or fixing it. She knows how to put it on the oven, or the fire, or pretty much anything there. That's my oldest one. My two youngest ones they are getting to be good scalers.... That's the thing, I like teaching them. Even the other kids as well, from our Reserve. If I can teach them, I prefer teaching them there. It brings joy to me to be teaching them what I*

*was taught when I was younger. And I think that is important to our culture and our heritage. Teach the ones that came after you.” (C4)*

It continues to be a place to be *Denesutíne*, to be with the ancestors, and to teach one’s children about those values. *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is reported as being “*the only place left*” for Cold Lake First Nations members use and occupancy.

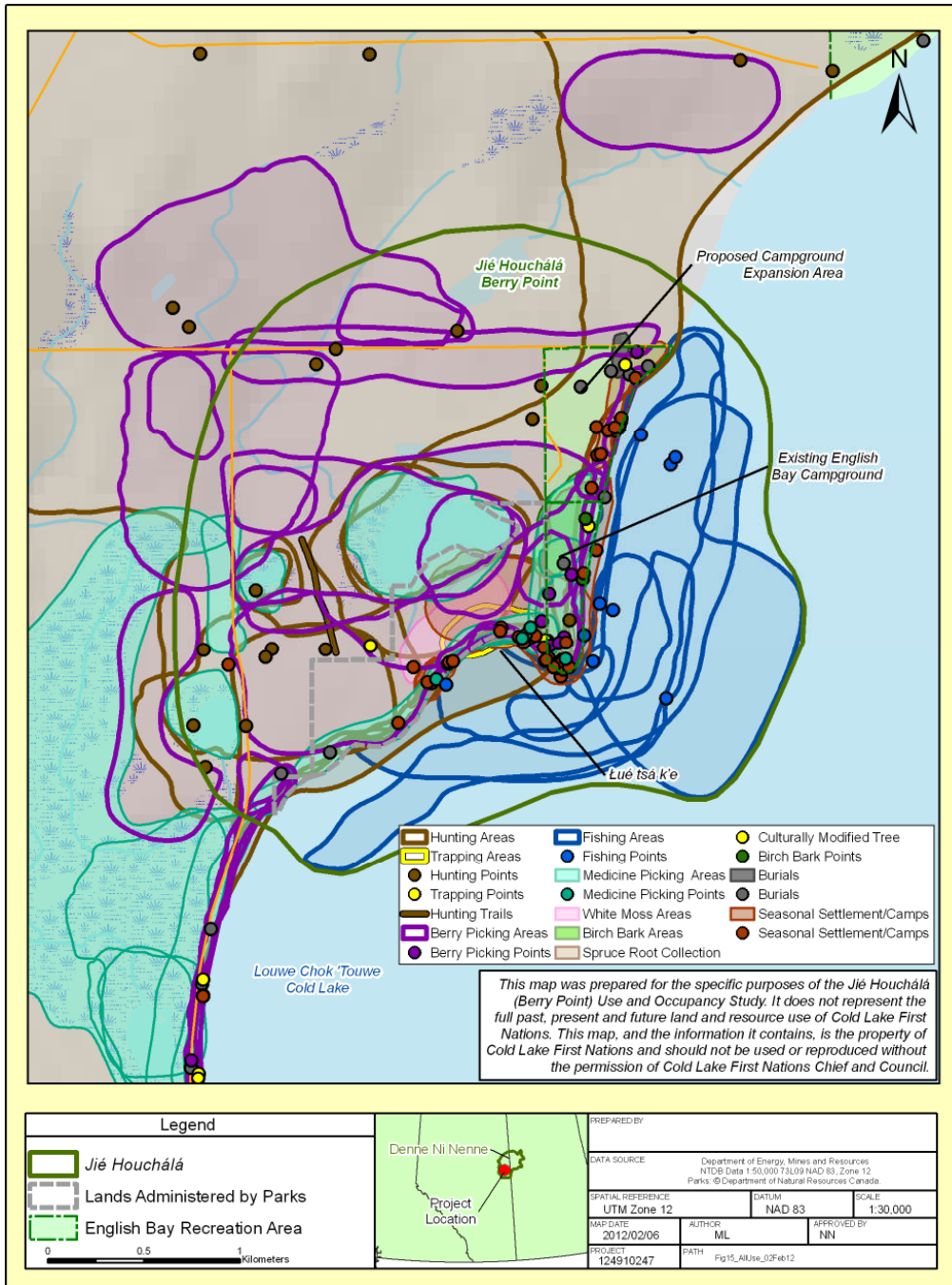
*“...it’s one of the most important areas to us. As a sacred burial ground and an area of very strong spiritual significance, not only... that the bodies [burials] are there, but also in a historical link to our ancestors and a current use to our people, and ongoing to the future generations. It’s priceless to our people... It’s essential to us.” (C17)*

## 5.7 Summary

Based on mapped use and occupancy information, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* extends north of the point along the shore of Cold Lake to encompass traditional fish camps, south of the point along the shallow bay to the northern end of what is known as Sandy Beach, east to encompass fishing grounds, and west to encompass berry picking, medicinal plant harvesting, hunting, and other resource collection areas (Figure 5.16). The value of any given traditional use and occupancy sites and activities throughout the *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* area does not exist in isolation from the whole. The entire complex of use and occupancy areas present within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is required to support the use and occupancy of any given site or activity area that makes up part of the larger whole. The entirety of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* must be viewed as a single, albeit large, site consisting of many different activities occurring in space and time.

The north-south extent parallels what Cold Lake First Nations fishermen have described as exceptionally productive net fishing grounds in all seasons, and, based on the use and occupancy information shared by Cold Lake First Nations participants, harvesting of fish at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* has occurred continuously throughout living memory. The long-standing importance of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* as a fish camp is reflected in a very old *Denesutíne* name for the area just west of the point, along the shore of the shallow bay: *Lué tsá k’e* which translates as “place to cache fish”. While fishing can, and does, take place throughout the year at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, the late fall whitefish spawning season prior to freeze-up was the impetus for a historical seasonal fishing settlement that consisted of tents (and the occasional more permanent structure) located along the shore stretching from the shallow bay northward to the shore area east of the current fish hatchery. The fall fishing settlement was associated with the annual move of Cold Lake First Nations families to Primrose village and traplines in the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range. Many families would set up camp at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, which lies along the traditional Primrose Trail, to catch and preserve whitefish for winter use. Some of this fish would be carried by families to northern winter settlements, while some of it would be cached at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Other families enroute to Primrose, would stop at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* for a shorter time, to visit, to take a rest and refreshment, and to feed and rest their horses.

Besides fishing, the other critical resource procured at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, as reflected in the name of the place, are berries. *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is known as an exceptional area for blueberries and cranberries, and, due to the intersection of a variety of ecotypes that makes the area so ecologically rich and diverse, also has an availability of a variety of other berries such as Saskatoons, raspberries, gooseberries, high bush cranberries, and others. In historic times, seasonal berry picking camps (throughout the same settlement area as the fishing camps) would be erected during the prime blueberry-picking season. More recently, berry picking day trips are common.



**Figure 5.16 All Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Locales Mapped in *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point***

Besides the two corner-stone uses of berry picking and fishing, a variety of other resources are harvested at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Large (moose) and small (rabbits and grouse) game historically and currently are hunted and procured at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. A wide variety of important medicine plants are also available and harvested at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, and are part of larger mosaic of medicinal plant gathering locales (some of which are associated with relatively rare and highly valued medicines) in the immediate area. Birch bark historically and currently is collected for basket making, for moose callers (a tool for replicating the call of a moose during rut which attracts moose during that same season), and other traditional tools and implements.

Based on the oral history and traditional use and occupancy information shared by Cold Lake First Nations participants during community meetings and interview and mapping sessions, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is an area of critical importance due to the presence of key resources and qualities ideal for camping and seasonal settlement, its accessibility to Cold Lake First Nations occupied reserve lands, and its location along the traditional Primrose Trail. Once a long-standing seasonal settlement area, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* continues to be an area of high use and significance for Cold Lake First Nations at the current time and for the future, despite some interruption in the historical patterns of use due to creation and management of English Bay Provincial Park.

It is the richness of the resources that are available that makes *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* unique and valuable for Cold Lake First Nations use and occupancy. The long-standing use of this area is reflected in indicators of occupancy including place names, the settlement / camp complex, stories about the use of Primrose Trail, and knowledge of burials in the area.

## **6 IMPACTS TO OCCUPANCY AND USE OF *JIE HOUCHÁLÁ/BERRY POINT***

The past, present and possible future impacts to Cold Lake First Nations occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* are presented in this section of the report. These impacts arise from a variety of impediments to occupancy and use and are generally related to:

- Decreased access to preferred areas (for example, through lands no longer being available because they are used for other purposes such as industrial, agricultural, municipal/residential, and parks; through the imposition of harvesting regulations; through barriers that prevent access such as gates across trails);
- Decreased quantity and quality of key resources, including concerns about contamination;
- Incompatibility, conflict and competition with the interests of non-aboriginal recreational land and water users (e.g., campers, hunters, fishermen, snowmobilers); and,
- Concerns about safety (for example, hunting cannot take place safely in populated areas or in areas with facilities or above ground pipelines; people may choose NOT to take their children out if an access road to an area has a lot of heavy industrial traffic; lone harvesters may feel intimidated when they come into contact with recreational land users and may avoid areas (or avoid going out entirely) to avoid such situations).

These impediments arise from encroachments on Cold Lake First Nations' traditional lands, occupancy and use. Encroachments are activities, policies, decisions, and developments that affect Cold Lake First Nations members' abilities to access preferred lands. Those encroachments that impact harvesting are perhaps the most significant in this regard, since the traditional livelihood, and the *Denesuline* culture which is intimately linked to it, is dependent upon harvesting activities.

The types of encroachments (and associated impediments) that Cold Lake First Nations is already experiencing with respect to occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* are considered first in Section 6.1. In Section 6.2 the impacts to occupancy and use which are currently experienced by Cold Lake First Nations, arising as a result of the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the encroachments, are considered. In Section 6.3 the concerns expressed by Cold Lake First Nations members about the proposed construction of English Bay Recreation Area and the identification of possible future impacts to occupancy and use that are anticipated should the park construction proceed. Section 6.4 provides a summary of specific anticipated impacts of proposed construction of English Bay Recreation Area. In Section 6.5, the significance of impacts to Cold Lake First Nations use and occupancy of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* are discussed.

## 6.1 Encroachments Experienced To Date

### 6.1.1 Taking up of Lands for Private Settlement

In order to understand the encroachments experienced by Cold Lake First Nations to date, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* must be considered with the broader context of encroachment all around the shores of Cold Lake itself. As a result of parks and municipal and residential developments, areas that have been used by Cold Lake First Nations for generations within living memory are being taken up and preventing or precluding access and/or the exercise of practices, customs and traditions that are uniquely Denesuline.

*"[W]hite people have bought lakefront property in many places where we used to go... It's private property now because their population is increasing and white people are going to all those areas and it's no longer available to us... Not it's private property, keep out. We can't even go in there."* (C12)

*"This is the town. All this road used be open road, - the old wagon trail right along the lake. People would be passing through. Now they have made developments all over the place and we can no longer pick berries. It's all been destroyed....The new town development - and later on they put in these range roads - that had a lot of effect on all of us, because they blocked off a lot of places from where people were all the time free to go anywhere. And now you see No Trespassing signs. They blocked off the roads."* (C16)

Beginning in the 1930s, Euro-Canadian homesteaders settled within, and on lands in close proximity to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (Figure 6.1). Of particular relevance in this regard is the Doyle family homestead that was established in 1934 which falls within the area known to Cold Lake First Nations as *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Also relevant is the homestead of Len Alsep, which was located south of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

All of the interview participants (except the two in their early thirties) were asked whether they had recollections of the Doyle family. All who did consistently emphasized that there was very little interference with occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, adjacent lands, or the *Primrose Trail*. While the settlers took up *Denesuline* lands for their homesteads, the relationships with the members of Cold Lake First Nations were, for the most part, reported could be characterized as friendly co-existence. For example:

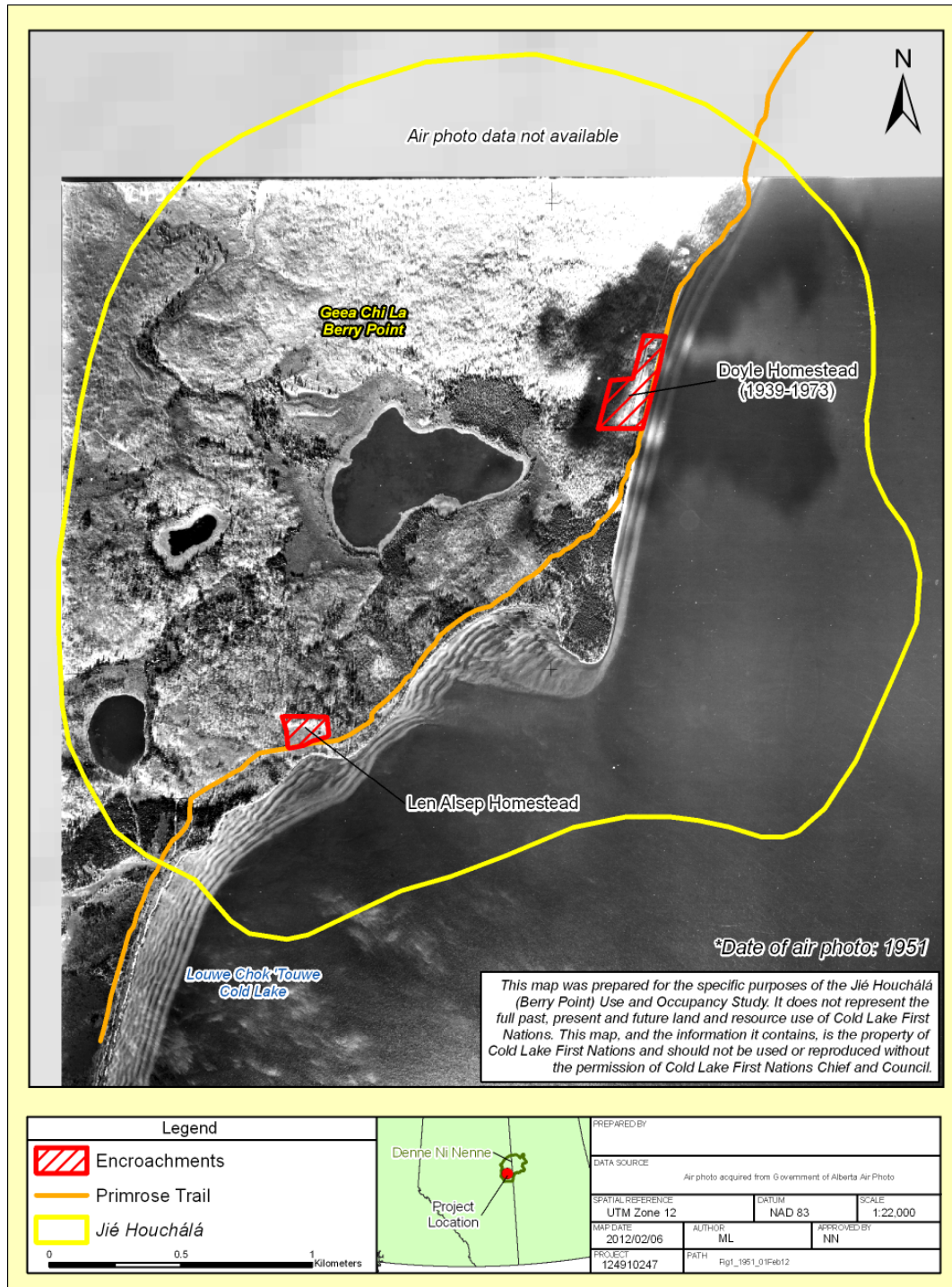
*[Interviewer: So when you were younger did anybody ever try to keep you out of Berry Point or try to stop you from using the route road to Primrose?] No. That was always ours. Nobody can stop us. Well there were hardly any white men in them days; there were just a few people that used to live [there].... There was one old man by this side of Berry Point; we used to call him 'Coffee' [Len Alsep]. That was his nickname; I don't know his real name. We used to call him Coffee, a white man, an old bachelor. People would just stop there and he would offer you coffee, so people called him 'Coffee'. So right there, Doyle used to live there; Jim Doyle. He lived right at the Point there, but he didn't keep too much. We could go to the other side with him. The other side, lately we call it Boniface Andrews' fishing grounds, on the other side of Doyle's."* (C3)

*"We didn't feel strange to go there [Berry Point]. There was a couple of houses further down. They never bothered us. My dad used to work for one of those guys [Len Alsep] and make a dollar a day."* (C15)

*"He [Jim Doyle] had a house there away from the lakeshore, about 100 yards, but the road is right along the lake....we'd go by his house on our way around.... there was no problem. He knew us. He had the respect for us. The road was right along the lake, all the way to Smith's. We called it Smith's at North Bay."* (C3)

*"Jim Doyle was good too. He had a nice place there, there was berries all over. He never bothered anybody; he just let people go there."* (C15)





**Figure 6.1 Encroachments as of 1951**

*“Jim Doyle, yeah. We used to go by his place there, he had crab apple trees of all things....And then he had raspberry canes growing there, because before that we used to pick the wild raspberries. We used to admire all these raspberries, oh god. And he had cows, and he was good to the Indians. I mean, he didn’t chase them off or threaten to shoot.” (C12)*

*“Every one of them that lived along there were welcoming and were very nice to us. To everyone. They never said ‘get out of here’. We were always welcome. I don’t remember any of them ever having...– the doors were always open.” (C7)*

And while Mrs. Doyle was protective of her raspberry bushes and crab apples, use of *Primrose Trail* was not prevented. Nor was the use of longstanding fish camps close by:

*“That old lady was cheap of her berries... there’s raspberries all along her house like this here. And right out behind there were crab apple trees. Oh they were delicious. You couldn’t even go near; you weren’t even allowed to grab anything. We always did [travel by there on the trail]. That was the road. I always remember that old lady, that skinny old lady with a broom. I remember her all the time. I can still see her with her broom. [Interviewer: She never stopped you from using that trail?] They never stopped us. Nope. I remember we used to go fishing just further down, we stayed there. And we used to sneak up there....I used to try and go steal berries. It didn’t work.” (C10)*

It is clear from study informants that despite the taking up of lands for early homesteads in and around *Jié Houchálál/Berry Point*, Cold Lake First Nations use of the area, including the use of customary fishing and camping locations and travel along the *Primrose Trail* continued until the Doyle family left in 1973. It is not known when Len Alsep left.

More recently, the Whispering Spruce Estates residential development was established (perhaps sometime in the 1980s, although the date could not be confirmed) immediately to the north of, and contiguous to, *Jié Houchálál/Berry Point* (Figure 6.2). According to Cold Lake First Nations members, this housing development overlaps a traditional *Denesutline* camping and harvesting area. This residential development is also associated with barriers (gates) placed at access points to *Primrose Trail*.

*“See before all this private property [Whispering Spruce Estates], the old road went through here down to the mouth of the [Medley] River and that whole area we used to use. That became private property. All those houses there became private property and we are blocked off right there from going any further.” (C5)*

*“See what happened was, when they built these two roads here, before that it probably was further up, but they cut us off here by the fish hatchery and by this road here, that they used for military road that goes into the military road here. They cut us off here in this square area here, so we got just this little piece of land here and all this area here, the white people are moving in here. They got a big town site there, subdivision [Whispering Spruce Estates]. They have [another] one [residential development] past Medley River. Medley River has got one estates out there too. That is where all the Dene opened up the roads for them and then they start building and now they got these paved roads, well not this one here, but this paved road here cut us off and the fish hatchery is on this side of this road. And into here, there used to be all this here. That’s where people camped too, there. There’s a little nice campsite there but now it’s all developed.” (C8/RM)*

There are also two private residences at the Cold Lake Fish Hatchery.

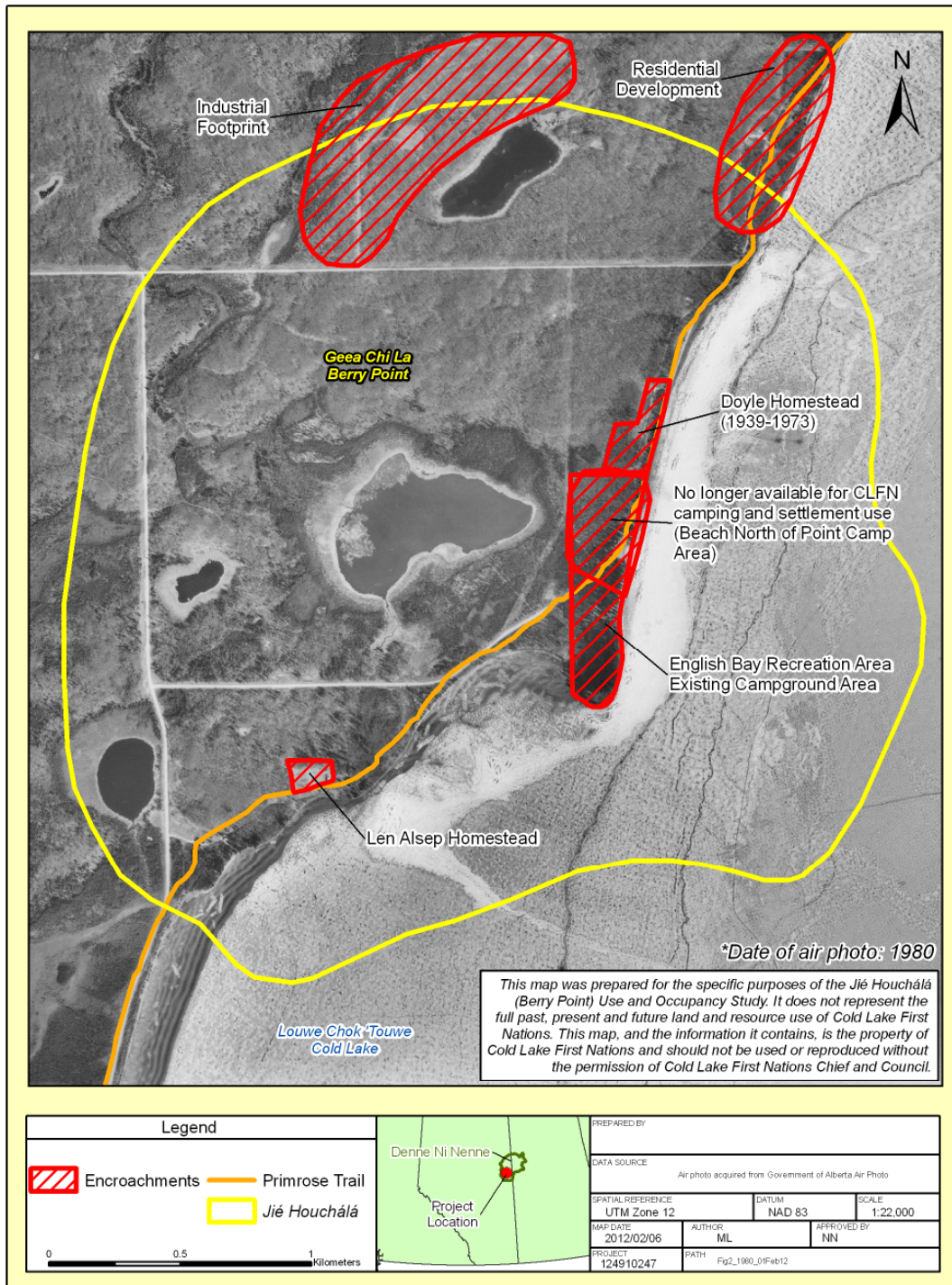


Figure 6.2 Encroachments as of 1980

## 6.1.2 English Bay Recreation Area

English Bay Recreation Area was created in 1959. Cold Lake First Nations members report that the creation of provincial parks around Cold Lake is associated with displacement from valued ancestral settlements, burial grounds, and harvesting camps; prohibition of and/or restrictions on, hunting, gathering and other associated customary practices and activities; and, placement of barriers on ancestral trails that provide access to *Denesuline* settlements, camps and harvesting areas. These types of impacts arise from a number of types of encroachments associated with park development, management and use. Even where these impacts have been experienced in relation to parks other than English Bay Recreation Area, they are relevant to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* because Cold Lake First Nations members not only draw from these experiences in their evaluation of what possible effects that park construction could have, but also because the loss of use of other areas associated with park construction is part of the cumulative encroachment on Cold Lake First Nations use and occupancy of *Denne Ni Nenné* in the broader sense.

Provincial parks are associated with a number of restrictions on activities that are central to traditional use and occupancy of the land. These include, but are not limited to:

- **The construction and maintenance of structures is not allowed**, which interferes with the ability of Cold Lake First Nations members to erect and maintain traditional *Denesuline* use and occupancy infrastructure such as cabins, smoking and/or drying racks, sweat lodges, etc. – the very requirements for processing the *gifts of the land* in traditional ways.
- **The collection or removal of any plant or animal life is not allowed in parks without the permission of the Minister**; *Denesuline* traditional land use and occupancy, however, is dependent on the free ability to harvest plant and animal resources and *survive on the land* – the fundamental tenet from which *Denesuline* traditions, customs, and practices are derived.
- **The dressing, hanging and storing of big game is not allowed in a provincial park**. The processing of game is the single-most significant *Denesuline* activity that not only provides food for the camp, but is the very medium by which cultural values, traditions, customs and protocols are honored, celebrated, shared, and transmitted. (e.g., protocols for the proper and respectful treatment of animals, traditional techniques for dressing and preserving game, such as the making of drymeat). a significant component that supports multi-day *Denesuline* camps, as well
- **Overnight camping is only allowed in designated areas**, which is generally inappropriate for *Denesuline* multi-family traditional camps, especially those that are preferentially selected and set up in natural areas that have been occupied continuously for generations.
- **There are restrictions on the possession or discharge a firearm** within a provincial park, potentially interferes with the ability to harvest game for sustenance.

Regarding English Bay Recreation Area specifically, as shown in Figure 1.3, the park and associated existing campground area overlaps *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, a long-standing ancestral and significant occupancy and use and area for Cold Lake First Nations. Management and recreational use of English Bay Recreation Area results in a number of other encroachments to Cold Lake First Nations that are associated with:

- the loss of access to a significant portion of the long-standing ancestral settlement area at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and subsequent loss of use of many customary *Denesuline* camp locations (Section 6.2.2);
- the physical/energetic disturbance and subsequent loss of resources (*gifts from the land*) to use, e.g. berry patches, medicinal plants, birch groves (Section 6.2.1);
- disturbance of the less tangible qualities of place (e.g. solitude, quiet, natural order/beauty) that are associated with the suitability of the location for spiritual practice, prayer, healing, ceremony and *being with the ancestors* as a result of recreational use (Section 6.2.2); and,

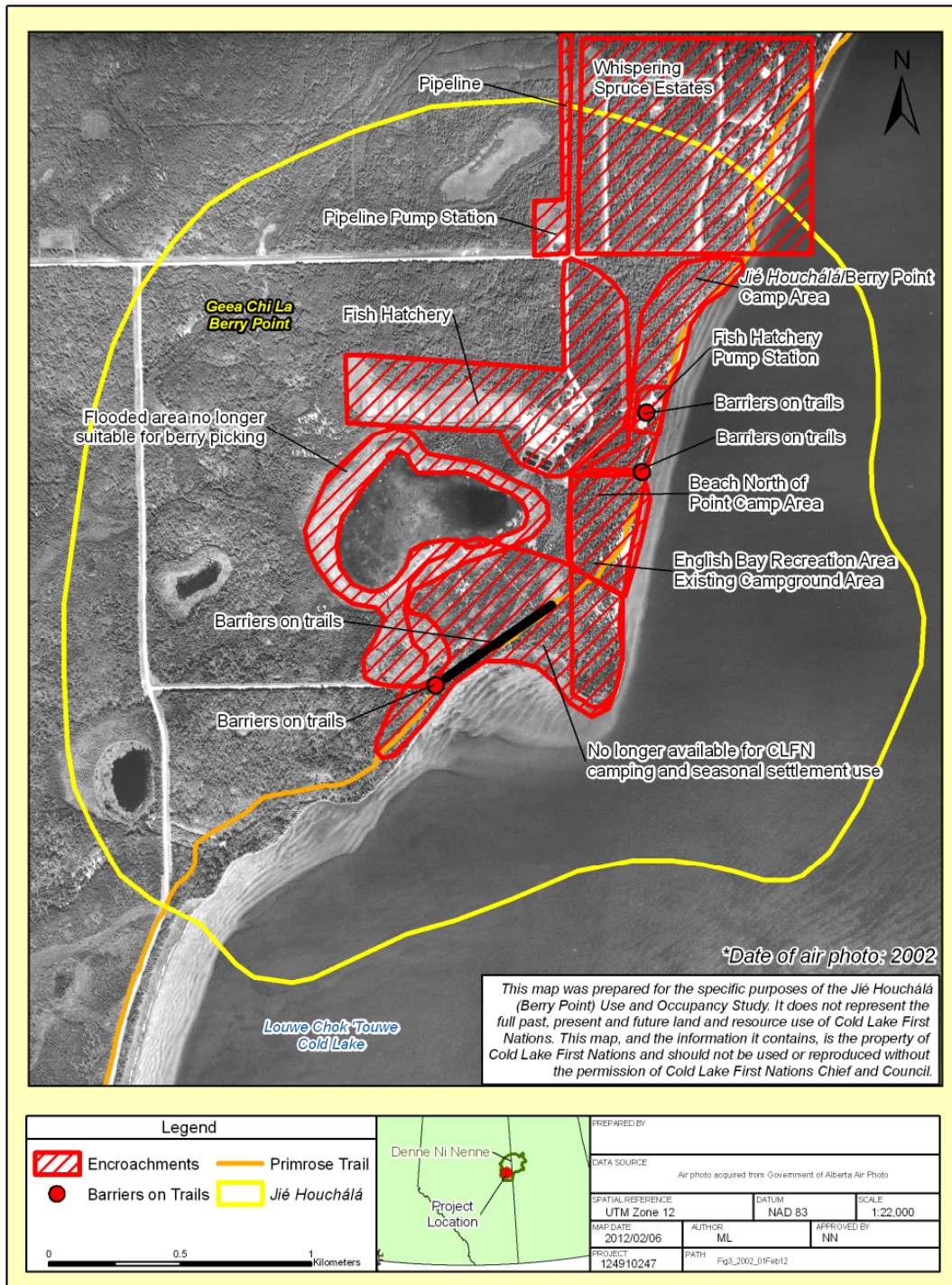
- parks management rules and recreational use that have restricted or preclude traditional *Denesuline* harvesting and associated activities (Section 6.2.1).

### 6.1.3 Physical Disturbance and Alteration of Land

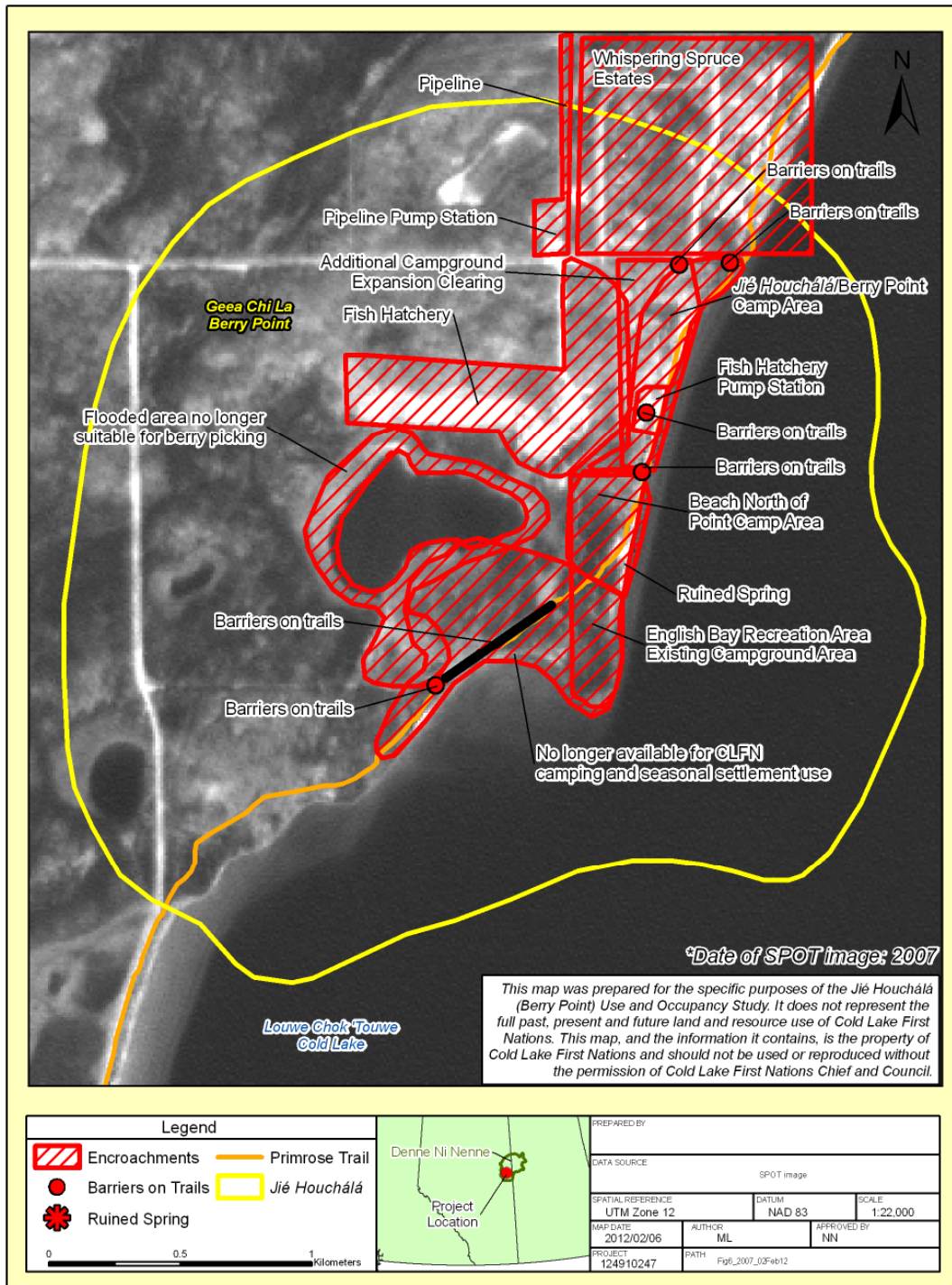
Physical disturbance to, and alteration of, the land causes direct impacts to traditional resources (e.g., berry picking locations), ancestral cultural areas (e.g., burials, landmarks), camp locations, trails and access, and the intangible energetic, aesthetic and spiritual qualities (e.g., experiences of peace, solitude, ancestral connection) that are associated with places that are suitable for spiritual practice, healing and ceremony. Physical disturbance to, and alteration of, waters (e.g. Cold Lake) includes such things as changes to quality and quantity and results in impacts to the quality and quantity of traditional resources (e.g., fish). Physical disturbance and alteration that arises from land clearing activities and maintenance operations can have a number of indirect impacts. For example, noise generated during construction activities can interfere with hunting by scaring off game, as well as disturb camp or other non-harvesting cultural activities (e.g. ceremonies, stories).

While it is outside the scope of this investigation to attempt cataloguing all of the past physical disturbances which have occurred in regard to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, it is possible to set out a number of major physical disturbance events or activities that have occurred over the years. These include:

- The Doyle Homestead, development of which began in 1934 involving the clearing of land (see Figure 6.1). Use of the Doyle Homestead proper was discouraged, although Cold Lake First Nations use of *Primrose Trail* and traditional camps continued.
- Military upgrades to the Primrose Trail sometime in the early 1950s, which involved straightening and widening segments of existing trail and the cutting of a new road bed. Use of Primrose Trail by Cold Lake First Nations continued.
- English Bay Recreation Area campground construction after 1959, which included campsite clearing, access roads, and construction of a camp shelter for cooking.
- Construction of the Cold Lake Fish Hatchery in 1984/1985, which involved the creation of a pond and changes to the water dynamics in the small lake to the south, including the flooding of berry-picking areas around that lake (Section 6.2.1.3; Figure 6.3); and the clearing and construction of a pump house (and pipeline between the hatchery and the pump house) on the beach just east of the fish hatchery impacting the “Beach North of Point Camp Complex” area within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* (Section 6.2.2).
- Clearing of a large irregularly shaped area and associated access road (likely an industrial development) sometime before 1970, north of the fish hatchery, followed by clearing of a rectangular pad in the same area sometime between 1970 and 1980 (see Figure 6.2). This location now hosts the Canadian Natural Resources Limited (CNRL) High Lift Pump Station (3-3-65-2 W4M) for a freshwater pipeline from Cold Lake to oil sands operations near Wolf Lake. This pipeline runs through English Bay Recreation Area (Figures 6.3 and 6.4) and was installed sometime between 1980 and 2002. While the freshwater pipeline may no longer be operational, the footprint remains.
- Commencement of construction within English Bay Recreation Area in 2006, which involved new clearing to the north of the existing campground location and the excavation of a large refuse pit on the beach area in the existing campground location. This resulted in impacts to a spring (Section 6.2.3), berry patches and birch groves (Section 6.2.1), and to the aesthetic and intangible qualities important to the peaceful enjoyment of place (Section 6.2.2).



**Figure 6.3 Encroachments as of 2002**



**Figure 6.4 Current Encroachments**

#### 6.1.4 Water Withdrawals and Contamination

Traditional occupancy and use is inextricably linked to water. The loss of water resources throughout *Denne Ni Nenné*, is of utmost concern to Cold Lake First Nations, and is a serious encroachment in its own right.

*“These lakes are pretty much gone already. Seriously, ten years ago where that lake was showing on this map, I went with my uncle Armand to track moose and stuff like that... when we got there, we had trouble looking for it because we drove right by it and we said ‘this is not it because it’s too small. It looks like a pond.’ But then I looked at the outline of where the shore used to be, then looked at the map, and where we were, it was that lake. It was completely gone almost. There are other little lakes down the road where they are pretty much all gone... That’s pretty sad. The oil companies are sucking out all of this water.” (C4)*

Cold Lake First Nations members have observed that water quality and quantity in Cold Lake itself has declined over the years. For example: *“All along the lake, you can see the gas and oil that’s on the rocks. You can see a rainbow coloured film” (C10 and C20/RM).*

This decline often is attributed by Cold Lake First Nations members to the following factors:

- **Industry water withdrawals from the lake and industry contamination entering the lake.** Some oil sands projects withdraw fresh water from Cold Lake and pipe it to their operations to use for the generation of steam that is injected into the ground to “melt” bitumen deposits so that the resource can be “sucked” out of the ground for processing. For example, an Imperial Oil Resources pump station on Cold Lake, just to the north of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* at LSD 14-2-65-2 (Figure 6.5) is currently is licensed to withdraw water from the lake and that withdrawal limit will be further increasing with a facility expansion. That this water is not returned to the lake is a concern for Cold Lake First Nations members. There is further concern that more water is being taken out of the lake from cumulative withdrawals (municipal and industrial) than is going back into the lake: *“there is a deficit of water, more is coming out than is going in” (C6/RM).*

- **Industry water use and impacts to groundwater and drinking water.** There are concerns and stories about how industry withdrawals of groundwater and of bitumen have caused subsurface geological issues that ultimately impact freshwater resources. For example,

*“Imperial oil has ruined the formation and disrupted the water. Here at English Bay, just out here at the edge of the reserve, we are not allowed to use water. Anybody in this area close to Imperial, I think it’s a three mile radius, can’t use freshwater [due to contaminants in the water] and that’s been noted for at least 20 years” (C21/RM).*

Participants also provided an example that the Medley River has been impacted by oil sands industry pollutants: *“Even the [Medley] river itself is dead,.. Years ago you could hear the water rushing and the water used to taste good; now you can’t even drink it... It’s because of the oil patch further west, it seeps into the creek” (C8 and C20/RM).*

- **Destruction and disruption of springs around the lake and that flow into the lake.** According to Cold Lake First Nations members, the springs all along the lakeshore refresh the water in the lake, revive the oxygen levels and bring in valuable minerals, and are necessary for *“the livelihood of the fish, of the lake, of the animals” (C8/RM).* The springs are linked to the health of the fish: *“if you wreck any of the springs, it kills the fish in Cold Lake” (C21/RM).*

- **Contamination associated with recreational use (e.g., motor oil/ gas from boats; garbage).** Cold Lake First Nations members have expressed concern about garbage that is found along the lakeshore and in the lake (e.g., stories of bringing up tires and engines in nets), the number of boats on the lake, and the amount of motor oil and gas that leaks from boat engines into the lake.



*“Jet engine boats and all that... racing around back and forth... all that is affecting, even the plastic jugs and the oil can jugs and the beer can tops where the birds get stuck in them and the floats, even bicycle and rims and all that along the lake. Pollution, garbage” (C10/RM).*

*“My net got real heavy... I had to stand up there and pick with all my might. It took me about two minutes to get one foot. Holy smokers, I thought I caught the mega fish; I thought I was fighting with him. It took me a good hour to pull in that net, and then as soon as I got to a point, I yanked up... I thought what the heck? I looked over and there was an old Johnson motor” (C4).*

A number of vehicles are sunk in Cold Lake as well, as a result of fishers going through the ice (C9). Furthermore, during the November 4 and 5, 2011 field visits, participants expressed concern about the amount of garbage that is pulled from the lake and that washes ashore.

Cold Lake First Nations members associate the changes that they have observed in water quality and quantity with some of the changes experienced with the quality and quantity of fish in Cold Lake. Preferred fish stocks are reported to be decreasing, whitefish in particular.

*“This lake is slowly being contaminated without our knowledge. It affects the fish. Its affects everything” (C20/RM).*

Furthermore, industrial facilities and activities along the lakeshore can interfere with fishing.

*“The Esso [Imperial Oil] pump house. This was another area, there’s a sharp bank off of this point, and it goes deep. It used to be good fishing at one time, a long time ago. But after Esso put that pump house there and they pumped water out, people have not really gone back there. It kind of interfered with fishing because there’s a vacuum of water going into that pipeline; it disturbed the habitat.” (C9)*

*“No anchors or nothing like that; you can’t really go set a net without sinkers or anchors. And there are big signs right on the shore [at the Imperial Oil pump station on Cold Lake] that shows an anchor... with a big circle and a cross through it.” (C4)*

### 6.1.5 Barriers to Access

Direct loss of access to locales and portions of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* has occurred as a result of:

- **The erection of physical barriers along the ancestral Primrose Trail and other associated trails used to access ancestral camping locations that comprise the larger *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* seasonal settlement.** The first of these occurred sometime in the late 1980s (after 1985), affecting camping and seasonal settlement in the southern portions of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* in the “Point and Bay Camp Complex” area (Section 6.2) as well as use of *Primrose Trail* through the campground area (Figure 6.3). Additional physical barriers were erected along the northern entries into the park in 2006 when the park was closed for construction. For the most part, this prevented access to, and use of, the ancestral camp location(s) in the “*Jié Houchálá/Berry Point North Camp Complex*” area, despite any later provisions that were made for Cold Lake First Nations to obtain keys for locked gates at the north end of the park (Figure 6.5).
- **The court order established in the spring of 2011 also resulted in a loss of ease of access.** While access for certain purposes continued to be allowed provided that notification to Parks was provided, it seems that, for the most part, Cold Lake First Nations members considered their ability to use the lands, as the *original people*, and in ways that were meaningful (i.e., in accordance with their customary and preferred means) was severely curtailed. *“The real barrier wasn’t felt until the Province did their thing in 2011... To tell us to leave” (C5).* This particular example is particularly relevant to the concerns Cold Lake First Nations members have about construction plans for English Bay Recreation Area, as well as the possible impacts that would be experienced should those plans proceed (Section 6.3). The purpose of discussing the results (i.e. impacts) of the court order is only

for the purpose of illustrating how actions such as this can have unintended consequences despite well-intentioned attempts to “mitigate” seemingly easily predicted issues (in this case the allowance of access for particular purposes provided notification was provided). It is not intended to call the validity of the court order into question.

In regard to physical barriers placed along access points and trails, these barriers were simply removed at first when they impeded use.

### 6.1.6 Recreational Use

Non-aboriginal recreational use includes activities such as sports hunting and fishing (summer and winter), camping, berry-picking, off-highway vehicle use (summer and winter), nature enjoyment (e.g., bird watching, hiking), and picnicking, swimming, and bush / beach parties. While it is a hard concept for many non-aboriginal people to grasp, recreational use is not necessarily compatible with *Denesutline* traditional occupancy, use and enjoyment of *the land* and in many ways interferes with, and encroaches upon it. This arises from, but is not limited to, the following:

- competition for resources (in the case of hunting, fishing and berry-picking);
- vandalism and destruction of property belonging to the Nation’s members (e.g., nets, cabins, smoking racks, etc.);
- contamination of traditional resources, as evaluated from the perspective of the Nation’s members; and,
- disruption of aesthetic and intangible qualities important to use including peace and solitude and a sense of comfort and safety.

In respect of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, and immediately contiguous areas, recreational use already has already impacted Cold Lake First Nations use in the following ways:

- Random camping and beach parties at Sandy Beach (a berry picking, medicinal plant collection and traditional camp area just south and contiguous to *Jié Houchálá*) has rendered the area *unclean* and unsuitable for berry picking (Section 6.2.1.3), and unsuitable for the Nation’s camps. For example, according to field visit participants, many non-aboriginal people are known to party at Sandy Beach and a lot of Cold Lake First Nations members no longer want to go there because of the risk of fights. Furthermore, the beach is littered with dangerous and unsavoury garbage like broken glass and condoms and therefore not a safe or appropriate place to bring children anymore (November 4, 2011 field visit; January 27, 2011 verification meeting).
- Recreational fishing creates competition for preferred resources and preferred fish stocks are being displaced by introduced species (e.g. introduced lake trout species replacing indigenous trout and whitefish, the preferred species).
- Recreational boaters (summer) and sledders (“ski-dooers”; winter) accidentally, and at times, purposefully, cut fish nets belonging to the Nation’s members.
- Cold Lake First Nations members traditional use infrastructure and property has been vandalized (e.g., nets, smoke racks).

The increased presence of recreational boaters (and, in winter, sledders) on Cold Lake not only intensifies the potential for conflict between traditional and recreational uses. Cold Lake First Nations members also are concerned about their contribution to pollution of the lake.

*“Seriously, on this lake, there are so many boats out there these days. They should regulate these ... boats by saying ‘okay there’s too many boats on the lake right now; maybe if two boats came off you can launch*

*your boat.' They're not going to like that. It's a beautiful lake, everyone likes coming to our lake, people like boating around the lake and stuff like that. But the more consumption of boats in our lake, the more oil and gas that is being spewed into our lake. If you go some places on the shores, you will see the residue of the oil on the shore of the lake. Not on the sand but on the shore of the lake where the water meets land. Winter time, there is whole bunch of Ski-dooers out there, people with trucks. I don't know, if we can regulate this kind of stuff it would be awesome, but it's too hard to do that. You'll need to have to have a task force of people driving around saying oh, you can't go out. Or there's a lot of places people can launch their boats. You can't just go around and say there's one too many boats on the lake so you have to get off the lake. I can't really see that." (C4)*

### **6.1.7 Cumulative Encroachments**

Besides the encroachments specific to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, Cold Lake First Nations members have experienced an increasing diminishment of ability to access, use and occupy the full extent of their traditional lands, *Denne Ni Nenné* as the cumulative result of a number of encroachments. These encroachments are associated with:

- Agricultural land expansion and development;
- Municipal expansion and development;
- Industrial expansion and development, especially oil sands development;
- Restrictions on harvesting, including hunting and fishing;
- Provincial Park development around Cold Lake; and most significantly,
- Closure of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range to Cold Lake First Nations use in the early 1950s.

*"Pre-Air Weapons Range, we had thousands of square miles of land. We slowly, over time, it slowly happened. It didn't happen overnight. In fact at treaty signing, they already started taking there. They allowed, under the pretense of co-existence, they allowed non-Native people into our territories and we started losing there and we are reduced to postage-stamp sized reservations. And still we could leave the reserve and practice our traditional lifestyles on our lands even back in the 1960s... But now, with more and more development of every kind, with municipalities growing, with parks growing, with industry swallowing up all the resource-rich lands, we are the ones that are denied. Nobody else can claim that they are losing anything because everybody else is gaining something. We are the only ones that are losing, because we are the ones that are utilizing those lands. Nobody else. Over time, south of the Air Weapons Range, from the mid-1950s I would say, this land Berry Point and up to Bombing Range line, was utilized by everybody [from Cold Lake First Nations]. Now most people because of access...don't use those lands now... I would say we have been denied a good 99% of our lands." (C5)*

While the full history of these encroachments is beyond the scope of this project, the cumulative loss of ability to exercise constitutionally protected treaty and aboriginal rights (i.e. traditional uses and practices) throughout the extent of *Denne Ni Nenné* is relevant to understanding the full extent of impact to Cold Lake First Nations should the occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* be diminished further or completely curtailed (see Sections 6.2.4 and 6.5). As shown in Figures 6.5 and 6.6, the majority of the lands within *Denne Ni Nenné* outside of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range are taken up for agricultural and industrial development. The shores of Cold Lake are taken up by Provincial Parks and residential development, with very few places left where Cold Lake First Nations is able to access and utilize lands along the lakeshore (Figure 6.6).

Cold Lake First Nations *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Traditional Land Use and Occupancy  
 Section 6.0 Impacts to Use and Occupancy of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*

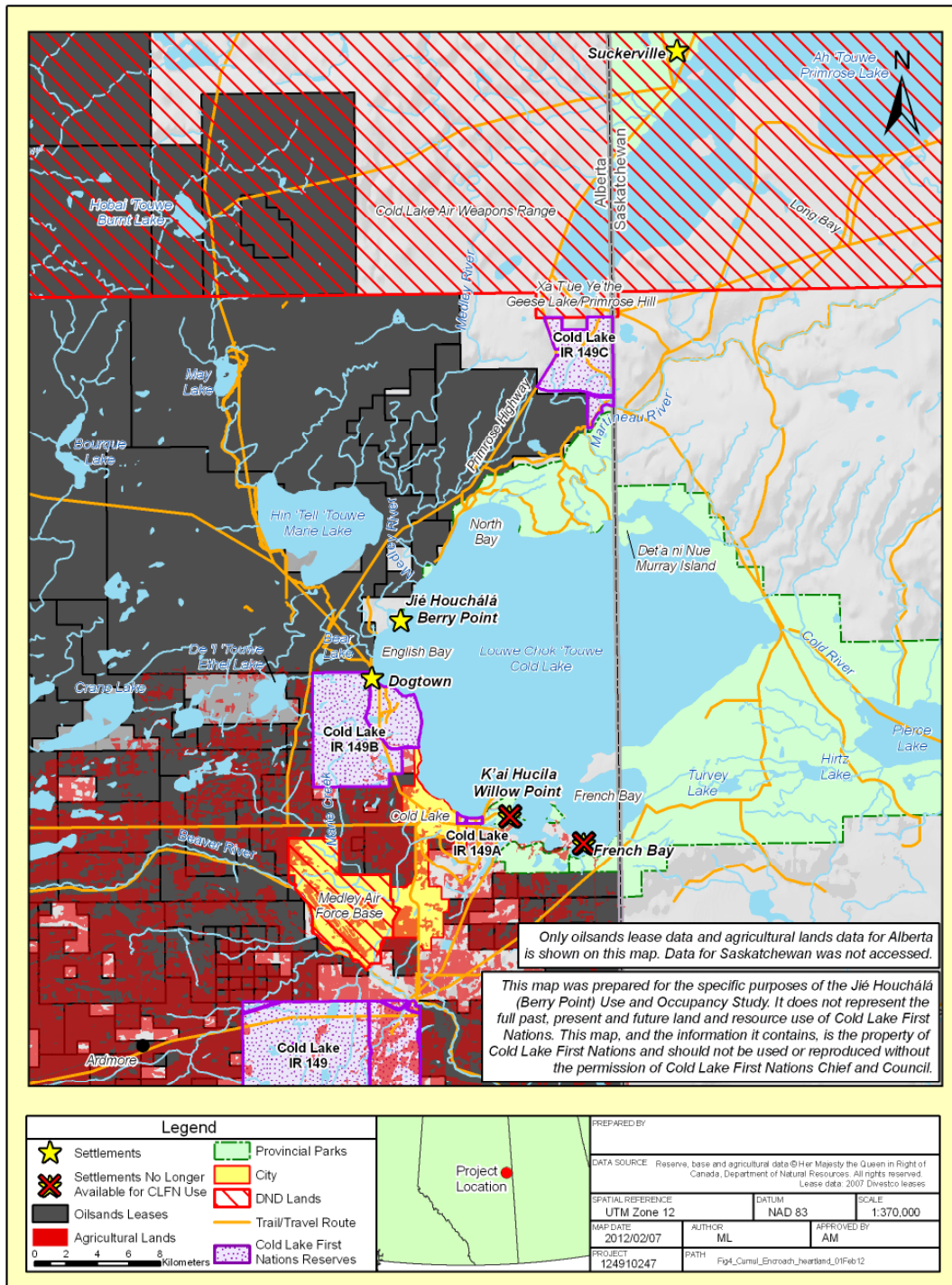


Figure 6.5 Cumulative Encroachments

Cold Lake First Nations *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* Traditional Land Use and Occupancy  
 Section 6.0 Impacts to Use and Occupancy of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*

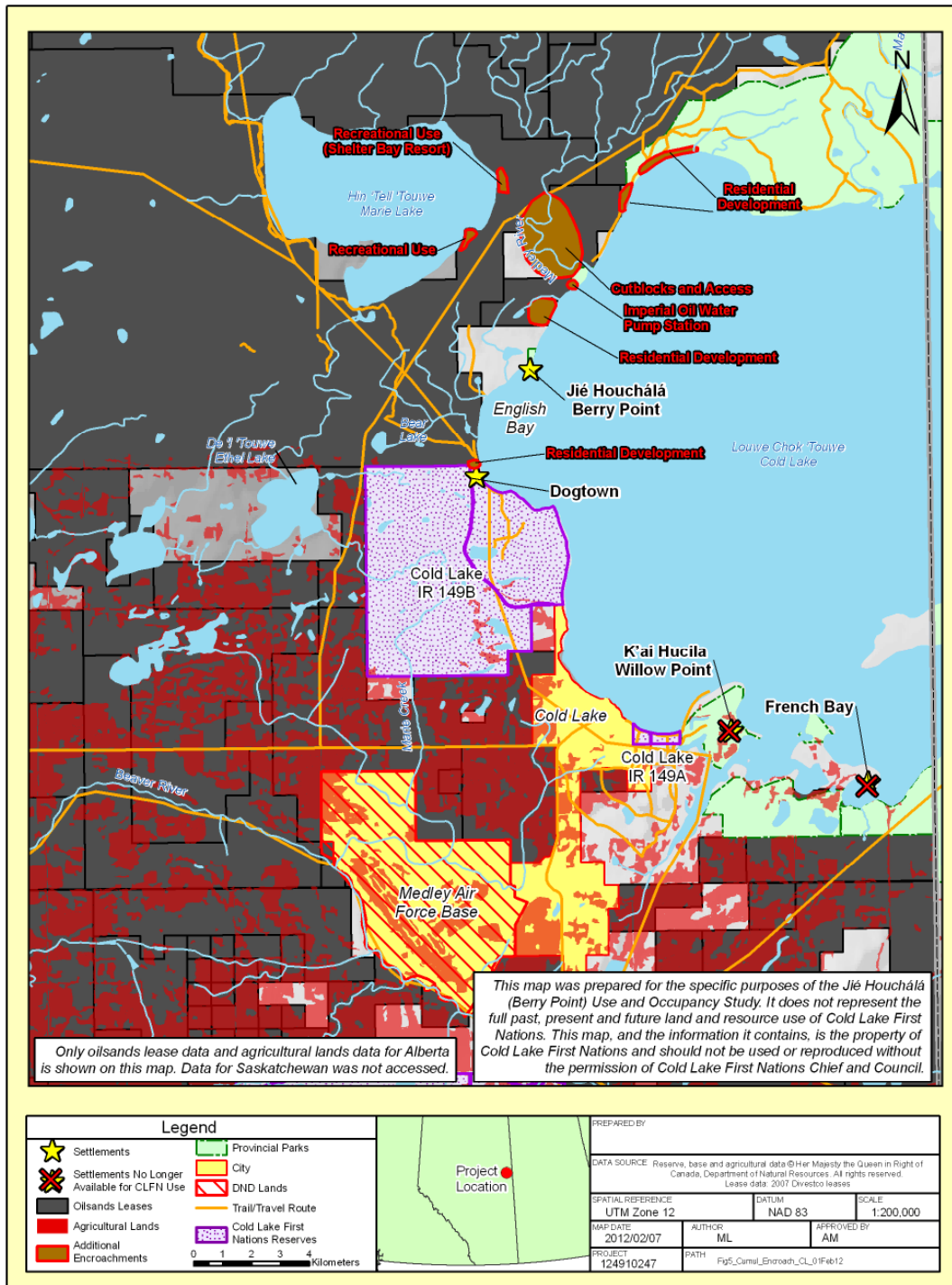


Figure 6.6 Cumulative Encroachments Cold Lake Shore

## 6.2 Experienced Impacts to Traditional Occupancy and Use

Encroachments lead to impacts to traditional land occupancy and use. These impacts may be direct, indirect or cumulative in nature. Cold Lake First Nations has already experienced a number of impacts to occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Overall, these impacts have diminished related activities and have impacted the overall pursuit of *Denesuline* livelihood. Despite these impacts, many members continue to practice traditional activities within *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* as best they can.

The main impacts to harvesting, occupancy and other connected values are presented in the three subsections that follow: Section 6.2.1 Impacts to Harvesting; Section 6.2.2 Impacts to Occupancy; and, Section 6.2.3 Impacts to Water.

### 6.2.1 Impacts to Harvesting

#### 6.2.1.1 Fishing

Not only is fishing generally becoming more difficult for Cold Lake First Nations members due to loss of fish stocks (health and preferred species) and loss of access the increasing presence of recreational boaters on Cold Lake also has already had adverse effects. In the summer nets are cut or stolen, and boats and paddles left ashore (a customary practice for Cold Lake First Nations members is to leave boats and paddles on the beachfront near where their nets are set as having to load and unload a boat from a trailer would be overly burdensome) are vandalized or stolen. In the winter, sledders (“ski-dooers”) and recreational ice-fishers may cut or steal nets as well.

*“The rod fishermen don’t even have respect for our nets and buoys, our markers, or anything like that. People fishing off the boats will just drive over them and cut them... they’ll just drive right over your net. And in the wintertime it’s even worse because the snowmobilers will just cut your line. I’ve lost a couple nets in the lake there already. They just go driving up there and before the hole freezes over they’ll pick up your line and cut it” (C4).*

*“I’m afraid of people driving over my nets and stuff like that. Even when I set my net right in the English Bay area, right in here, we still have white people that are going rod fishing in there... I had just finished putting my outside buoy on the one going outside the lake, because I set my net going this way. And as soon as I put it down there, there’s this guy driving and I could see him clear as day, and I was just yelling and screaming. He stops and he says ‘what’s going on?’ I said ‘can’t you see there’s two buoys here?’ And he says ‘yeah, so?’ And I said ‘there’s a net here.’ And he says ‘yeah, so?’ And he was about to go over it again. Then I was just screaming my head off, and he drove around it. So I sat in the shallows so that I could see the floats of the net on top of the water. They are easy to see; he was ready to drive over top of them. That would really have messed up his boat too because he was going fast. That would have taken my net and just twined it right around his prop.” (C4)*

*“As the community grew, Cold Lake grew, we had to watch our nets. ‘Cause people were stealing our nets, as the population grew and when the skidoos came... So the things we had to watch were our nets.... [I]t was a traditional thing to watch our nets there. Thing is, it was crazier when the population got bigger.” (C6)*

Cold Lake First Nations members further explained that, *“if we leave our boats there, our stuff is vandalized. Things that we leave there have gone missing. Even if we hide the paddles” (C21/RM)*. Boats are sunk, nets are cut in half, and paddles are stolen (January 27, 2011 verification meeting). One participant related that just two weeks ago (mid-January), a nephew’s nets had been pulled out and burned on the ice (C8/RM).

Cold Lake First Nations fishers have had to adjust their activities in order to take precautions, such as setting their nets early or late in the day, or camping near their nets, to avoid losing them.

*“People nowadays have to babysit their nets because people would go stealing their nets; destroy it and get nothing. So people used to camp, most people that I know, they have to go there late at night or early in the morning so nobody steals their nets.” (C16).*

*“We set our nets there later on in the evening when all the fishing boats and stuff like that, other boats are off the lake. We try to get out as early as we can before the other fishermen go out there; people like to fish first thing in the morning, rod fishing” (C4).*

Besides vandalism, the very presence of boat traffic can affect fishing as a result of sound pollution and other contaminants such as garbage and motor oil (January 27, 2012 verification meeting). Impacts to fishing also occur as a result of harvesting restrictions and provincial fisheries management policies and practices.

*“Because of the fish hatchery the game wardens were really after us not to fish in certain areas. When that fish hatchery didn’t work off the bat, it seemed like they blamed the Indians for overfishing again.” (C6)*

Impacts to fishing are considered a disruption to *Denesuline* right livelihood.

*“All they are doing is expanding, expanding, expanding and restricting us from our livelihood. Or interfering with our livelihood, I should say... All the campers that are coming in, either they come in on canoes or boats or whatever. They are out on the water, either cutting the nets, or destroying or chasing the fish away. It’s just an interruption on regular, day to day livelihood.” (C9)*

The area *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* to Rocky Point, including English Bay is one of only two areas that is open to Cold Lake First Nations subsistence fishing during a seasonal closure of Cold Lake to fishing between April 1 – May 20 (Figure 5.8). Cold Lake First Nations members also report that fish resources from lakes other than Cold Lake are sick and contaminated, placing ever-increasing reliance on Cold Lake.

*“About three – four years ago, some of these women made dry fish over there [at Primrose] but the fish were no good. So the fish is no good in Primrose. We don’t even try and bother to go eat fish over there... I’m a little bit scared that water coming from Primrose, from Martineau River into Cold Lake, might have polluted whitefish, our fish in Cold Lake. Right now our fish are not too bad, but I notice the fish are getting a little scabby” (C3).*

*“Muriel Lake is no good anymore. Moose Lake, it’s no good. They are all polluted lakes... Cold Lake is the only lake that is good for fishing right now.” (C3)*

### **6.2.1.2 Hunting**

Safety is an issue when it comes to hunting large game (e.g., moose), which requires the use of firearms, because of the risk of inadvertently shooting a person.

*“It would restrict me from my hunting because you have [people] running around all over the bush...you wouldn’t be able to see them in the green bush when you’re shooting a moose in their path or however. It’s restricting. It is a safety issue. If it’s in front of me and I can do it cleanly, without hitting the individual behind then I still would, yes.” (C9)*

*“We’d go all over the roads, anywhere there was moose. And we’d kill it and bring it home. But now we can’t do it, there’s too many people, signs all over the place – “no hunting.” Now they build a park, we can’t hunt.” (C16)*

*“Well the residences north of here [Whispering Spruce Estates], that puts barriers there of course. There are people with houses and people living there. If you see an animal that you need and if there’s any possibility of – like if you’re using a gun – you can’t shoot towards houses... you just don’t do those things because it’s unsafe. And so if there’s houses there of course its hindering our ability to hunt.” (C5)*

Besides park regulations which prohibit the use of firearms, there are also signs posted to discourage shooting near the Fish Hatchery (where there are private residences) and near Whispering Spruce Estates.

Safety is not an issue for rabbit hunting, which is usually accomplished with snares. Some members have had bad experiences with snaring rabbits in Parks.

*"I quit snaring rabbits when I got caught at the Park [Cold Lake "East" Provincial Park]...Me and my mother were out snaring rabbits...pretty soon we seen this ranger coming walking back with four rabbits...He charged us" (C16).* While this experience occurred at Cold Lake Provincial Park, this participant also used to snare rabbits at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, and discontinued that after the 1980 experience (C16).

### 6.2.1.3 Berry Picking

Berry resources at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, and the associated Cold Lake First Nations harvest have been disturbed by a number of factors including:

- Flooding of berry picking grounds associated with construction and operation of the Cold Lake Fish Hatchery;
- Impacts associated with recreational land use; and,
- Clearing and construction activities.

The lake to the south of the fish hatchery was once prime blueberry and low bush cranberry habitat and widely used by Cold Lake First Nations participants. After the fish hatchery began operations in the mid-1980s, the area around the lake, including berry picking patches, were flooded (Figure 6.3).

*"[All] this area – I don't know how big this lake was – it could have been just a muskeg - but this area used to be all for berry picking... And all of a sudden now, since I forget what year that fish hatchery went in... since then that lake is there and it has destroyed that whole area, destroyed berry picking areas. That whole area used to be a flat blueberry area... There was maybe a small body of water there but not to the extent it is now. Because they are pumping so much water out of the lake, that stream is only small enough to allow so much out. Plus the beaver dams have blocked that flow." (C9)*

The presence of recreational land users (e.g., campground patrons) has also impacted berry picking at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

*"The last time we picked berries in there was about 5 or 6 years ago, that I go. But there was more and more [white] people parked all over the place. I didn't like picking berries where people were parked... White people, they had their campers and tents and stuff. A lot of wild parties... they go in the bush and they do their thing out there, I don't want to pick berries where people tramped all over the bush, you know. And in the back the same way; me and my friends used to pick a pile of cranberries. (C16)*

Clearing and construction within the English Bay Recreation Area campground has also impacted the berry patches.

*"There's a lot of different areas, but from where that main [cook]shack is [at the campground], it was kind of to the west and along that road and into the south. Here's where I was snaring. Here's where the cook shack is here and the girls would be in the back here, or along in here. There's campgrounds all in there now, but at one time it used to be really nice for berries. It is all destroyed and trampled today" (C9).*

The recent construction activities associated with campground expansion in 2006 further impacted berry-picking areas, activities, and harvests.

*"Since they went through there with the caterpillars they've disrupted the berry patches." (C21/RM)*

*"There was raspberries up in here because I used to take my aunt; she knew the area really well. But the last time I brought her up here the roads were all blocked... That was two years ago." (C13)*

*"Berry Point has been used up until... what year was it... about three or four years ago. Was it five years ago? When the put those blockages there, I don't know when they put that there. About two, three years ago,*



*when they started putting those blockages there. My mother and my sister and I used to go there all the time to pick berries, and now when you go there, where we picked berries has all been plowed down... one day I went up there and here's this big block, big cement block blocking the road."* (C8)

Despite the impacts and increasing difficulties, berry picking at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* continues. Harvesting in the larger berry-picking complex, of which *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a component, has also undergone similar impacts. For example, the use of Sandy Beach by random campers and *party people* has rendered the place *unclean* and unsuitable for the collection of berries according to *Denesuline* standards.

*"[W]hat we were saying is that also along the lake here there used to be the wagon trail, right in here. That's [Sandy Beach] where they [Parks] cut it off. They made a white man's beach where it belonged to us, where the saskatoons used to grow really good. But once they started having all those parties and everything they killed all that"* (CLFN C34).

*"I remember Sandy Beach as a berry patch there too. There was a lot of saskatoons; the mothers used to bring their kids... Today because there have been so many people there, they wrecked the berries. The berries are not healthy there... White people, beach people that come from town... It's all wrecked by quads... We can't pick there anymore, it's not healthy... [I]t's not really that long ago that this beach has been destroyed because of all the new people that are coming in. They don't know the value we have there and they just took advantage of it."* (C13)

Furthermore, party-goers damage berry bushes (saskatoons and chokecherries) by cutting limbs for firewood (November 4, 2011 field visit). While some berry picking continues at Sandy Beach, it is increasingly difficult in the presence of incompatible activities.

*"Well I still pick berries there, but there's been a lot of ATV activity. There's garbage and campers, so... that make it not as good. And it's harder to pick berries when there's lots of people in there too. Lots of partying."* (C17)

#### **6.2.1.4 Medicinal Plant Collection**

Besides direct physical disturbance, the *"purity"* of the place and the associated quality of medicines, could be affected by the increased presence and activities of recreationalists. Impacts to the use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* for the harvest of medicinal resources would affect the intactness and value of the larger medicinal plant complex of which it is part.

In addition, participants in other Cold Lake First Nations traditional use study projects have reported that medicinal harvesting areas throughout *Denne Ni Nenné* are also being destroyed or their *medicinal powers* diminished by industry activities and that the prevailing 'extraction' agenda does not *respect the land* in its natural state. This is a matter of considerable concern to tradition-oriented members of the Nation who adhere to traditional healing practices because plant *medicines* of appropriate quality are *hard to find* and *do not grow just anywhere*.

#### **6.2.1.5 Harvest of other Plant Resources**

According to participants, the clearing activities for campground expansion destroyed groves of old birch at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

*"This used to be all full of birch trees all along the lake there. ... It was available all over that area. But there's huge piles of birch trees that parks cut down out there, as big as this room. Big piles of birch all over. They cut them all down"* (C5).

Furthermore, participant C10 related that a ridge upon which birch, which were used for sap and bark collection, grew, has already been impacted.

*“Yes, that’s gone too. And for birch juice. You know where they cut down that birch bluff right there? That’s what I’m talking about. That’s a medicine too.” (C10)*

## **6.2.2 Impacts to Occupancy**

### **6.2.2.1 Access to Seasonal Settlement and Camps**

For the most part, Cold Lake First Nations members did not set up camps in the English Bay Recreation Area campground, after it was established, although use of camping locations outside the provincial campground continued (C9/FV#2).

*“I never go there [to the campground itself]... Because there is too many people. People get so nasty. We camped there one night one year, a whole bunch of us, and there were a lot of party people yelling at us. I don’t know; people were scared, so we only stayed there one night... I didn’t want to stay where there are people that are getting made at you and swearing at us.” (C16)*

English Bay Recreation Area and the associated campground had some early effects on Cold Lake First Nations occupancy and use, especially in the “Beach North of Point Camp Complex” area of the seasonal settlement. However, it was not until barriers on *Primrose Trail* and other access trails into the “Point and Bay Camp Complex” area were established (sometime in the late 1980s) that encroachments were such that use could not be continued according to the appropriate and referred means of Cold Lake First Nations *Denesutine*.

*“About two years [ago was the last time participant camped at Berry Point], more than that, because I tried going back in there [her father’s camp in the “Point and Bay Camp Complex”] but there’s all deadfalls that blocked the road. I couldn’t go there.... And of course there is no trespassing all over the place; wherever we go... they blocked off this little area where we used to go in, and those little trails – they blocked the area out... I walk in there anytime, but I can’t drive in there. I have to park somewhere else and I go walking around... You walk around. But never to camp overnight, not like the way it was before.” (C16)*

Use of the *Jié Houchálá* North Camp Complex area was disrupted after barriers into the northern entrance to English Bay Recreation Area were erected after park closure in 2006.

*“It’s only recently. Recently, yes. They are trying to start moving in there. Recently, but not many either. For us to camp there, everybody is scared. I don’t know why they had to stop that and put the big steel things there. There’s ‘No Trespassing’ all over.” (C16 and C3)*

*We always camped (at OTX-17-C7); my grandchildren and I until 2005 sometime when they started fencing and put a gate up there and we couldn’t go in there anymore. But we did a lot of camping and fishing; mostly fishing. (C7)*

*Yes, we had a place there, we used to camp there. There’s a road in there, but now they even shut down them roads. You can’t even go there. [Interviewer: When was the last time you were even able to camp there?] Oh I camped there about 5 years ago, I think. But now they shut the places.... They shut those places, them campsites. They shouldn’t have. All of those campsites; they all shut them. They say they own them. (C3)*

*“[W]e had a place there, we used to camp there. There’s a road in there, but now they even shut down them roads. You can’t even go there.... I camped there about 5 years ago, I think. But now they shut the places.” (C3)*

*“When they closed it off. All of a sudden we were going to go camp in our traditional place, all of a sudden there was barriers put up. That was probably about five years ago...” (C6)*

### 5.7.1.1 Vandalism of Property and Traditional Use Infrastructure

Besides issues of access, Cold Lake First Nations members have experienced impacts to their belongings and structures that support *Denesuline* traditional use activities, beginning in the 1980s when the fish hatchery road was built and continuing until today.

*"[W]hen the road started opening, there was more public coming around looking for beach parties and whatever else. They destroyed everything they seen. As before the Natives, the Denesuline had boats. They would park all over the shores and they would have a rack where they put the nets to dry, and they had racks to make dry fish. When a lot of people started coming, well they destroyed it. They even destroyed the boats; they would burn the boats. So eventually people started taking every little thing they had back home to their boats, load them up and bring them home. People were destroying stuff on us." (C16)*

*"Somebody went and destroyed our smoke rack and all that kind of stuff... a permanent smoke rack built there ...and I'm sure it was parks people. Or maybe parks people hired some Denesuline to come and destroy our camps." (C5)*

### 5.7.1.2 Evidence of Ancestral Occupation

Physical disturbance to the land often destroys tangible remains that may be associated with ancestral *Denesuline* occupation – *the marks of the ancestors* - much of which would simply not be recognized by an unknowing eye. For example, evidence of caches in the muskeg area west of the lakeshore were likely destroyed because of the flooding associated with the fish hatchery.

*"This area, it used to be all muskeg that I know of, until they put that fish hatchery, and the lake started to come along. So in this area, that's where they used to cache their fish in the muskeg." (C16)*

Furthermore, the fish hatchery pump house is located where the Boniface Andrew's fish camp likely was. The clearing of the pump house area has destroyed the possibility of finding any possible tangible remains of that camp. Moreover, it has also destroyed the landscape and visual characteristics that could have been used to relocate this ancestral site.

Not only are tangible remains at risk but also less tangible values associated with ancestral occupation. Place names, an indicator of long term use and occupancy and that have high cultural value, are at threat of being lost in situations where an enduring and intimate relationship with a place cannot be maintained through on-going use.

### 5.7.1.3 Spiritual Qualities of Place

Recent construction activities have impacted the aesthetic qualities of place that are integral to the spiritual experience of use and occupancy of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*.

*"Around Berry Point was very popular for us people, south and Cold Lake First Nation, here. That's one of the places that was so nice. Nobody touched nothing. Spruce trees, nice, and it didn't come real bush too. It was kind of prairie. And now they tear all that up; it looks terrible now. It's not natural, the way it was supposed to be all the time. But now it looks terrible. I don't even like going there anymore." (C2)*

*"Trouble people were starting to go there and working there, just destroying the whole natural look of the park as we know how it looked." (C16)*

The actions and behaviours of recreational users (e.g., campsite patrons) disrespect the spiritual nature of the place, which impacts the spiritual energies.

*"Then when you have people at the Berry Point and before they close the park, they had people camping there and drinking, it's very disrespectful to our culture to be doing that in the burial area, in a spiritual area, and they're partying and playing loud music and drinking, and doing whatever. They have no idea of the*

*spiritual significance of the area... [S]ince they closed the park you can feel that the spiritual part of the area, the spiritual component of that area has gotten stronger from less human activity there. Less disrespectful human activity.” (C17)*

### 6.2.3 Impacts to Water

Since all life is understood by *Denesutine* peoples to depend upon water; water itself is sacred and respected and honoured accordingly. Traditional land occupancy and use is fundamentally dependent upon water because all life forms require water. Fish, for example, one of the staples of *Denesutine* diets live within the water. Other water requirements, clean water for drinking and domestic purposes (cooking, cleaning), is integral to camps and day trips on the land. According to Cold Lake First Nations traditional knowledge, the surface waters and groundwaters within *Denesutine* are interconnected. The sanctity of waters are acknowledged in simple, personal ceremonies (e.g., the cleaning and taking care of springs; the placement of a small tree branch on the lake surface as an offering).

Besides the impacts to water in Cold Lake, already noted in Section 6.1.4, specific water-related impacts have also occurred at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. According to Cold Lake First Nations members, the lake to the south of the fish hatchery has been flooded with the fish hatchery water (January 27, 2012 verification meeting). The observation of an oily film associated with the water is considered an indicator of contamination.

*“There is already a film, you can even see it on the trees where the water goes up and down, the oil is already contaminated on the trees, that’s why those little small trees have started to die” (C10/RM).*

In addition, one of the springs at *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* has been impacted by campsite construction activities. As reported by Cold Lake First Nations members *“they dug a big hole at Berry Point and they wrecked the spring there. The spring is right by the beach” (C21/RM; Figure 5.15)*. This large trench was excavated to burn refuse, such as logs and brush, associated with campground construction activities. Cold Lake First Nations members are concerned about contamination seeping from this trench into the lake (C5/FV#1).

### 6.2.4 Cumulative Impacts

Due to the impacts of incremental cumulative encroachments through time (Section 6.1.7) throughout *Denne Ni Nenné*, but especially with respect to those areas of particular cultural significance for Cold Lake First Nations occupancy and use, i.e. ancestral settlement areas and *gathering on the land places*, Cold Lake First Nations members are reporting that *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is the last remaining ancestral settlement gathering on the land area which is sufficiently intact to support the continuity of meaningful *Denesutine* occupancy and use.

*“[M]ove over, we are moving in. Get out’, that’s what we are used to. ‘Oh, you can’t be here no more’, that’s what we are used to. I feel pretty passionate about it because that is the last place. The oil companies took all of our lands, we can’t shoot a gun in a work area, you know. You can’t.” (C5)*

*“There’s been a lot of blockades put onto our harvesting trails and our accesses to the lake, there’s been all kinds of barriers be it rocks or gates, really big rocks, metal gates, metal barriers that aren’t gates. They’re cutting off our harvesting areas, our trails and our access.” (C17)*

*“Now we can’t live like we used to... [A]ll that whole works there [around the lake], see this whole works there we used to stay all the way up to here, all the way around [from French Bay to North Bay]. Now we can’t do it, it’s all closed off here.” (C2)*

*“They’ve closed off lots from us. [With] Berry Point now, they have taken the whole works over.” (C2)*

While Cold Lake First Nations occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* has continued despite the encroachments and resultant impacts, it is becoming more difficult and tenuous. With fewer and fewer places left to go in which Cold Lake First Nations members can engage in traditional practices and customs, in ways that are meaningful and attached to the *ancestors*, any further impacts to *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, can be expected to be significant and will challenge the ability of the Nation to maintain traditional *Denesuline* practices and customs and by extension, *Denesuline* identity and the transmission beliefs, values, customs and traditions to future generations.

*"[When I encountered barriers to access] I was hurt, I felt lonely, I felt all kinds of things going through my mind. What is really happening to us that we cannot even go here anymore to teach our children and our grandchildren to fish and to pick berries? Where is our teachings going to be with all this birch bark being gone?" (C13)*

### 6.3 Key Concerns Expressed About the Campground Construction and Expansion

As has been articulated in Section 5.5, harvesting traditional resources on *the land* are absolutely necessary to maintain *Denesuline* heritage and identity, and well-being.

Despite the encroachments and impacts already experienced, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* continues to be a place that is *lived upon*, gently 'used', loved and respected and considered to be integral to the future ability of the Nation to exercise constitutionally protected rights and retain and celebrate *Denesuline* identity and culture in an increasingly industrialized world. As described in Section 5, Cold Lake First Nations has a long ancestral history of occupancy and use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*. Despite the impacts, the ongoing relationships between *the land* and *the people* have been continuously maintained since *time immemorial* and continue to this day.

A number of key specific concerns about the proposed construction and redevelopment of English Bay Recreation Area have been expressed by Cold Lake First Nations *Denesuline* are articulated in the following.

The first and primary concern is that non-aboriginal recreational use and *Denesuline* traditional occupancy and use are not necessarily compatible and as a consequence there Cold Lake First Nations' traditional activities (customs, traditions, practices), cannot co-exist in an area that sees intensive non-aboriginal recreational use.

*"I believe that...the new development and hunter-gatherer societies can't exist side-by-side no matter what mitigation we try.... You can't have a development going on over there and people hunting on the other side of the willows. It doesn't work... [N]o matter what they try to mitigate, the two don't work together and they never will. Not to the satisfaction of both parties." (C5)*

*"Who wants to go pick berries when somebody else pissed on them? It's not pure anymore" (C10). Furthermore, "it's all going to be trampled. Even the medicine that grows right along the river, right along the lake" (C10).*

*"You can't snare rabbits and hunt and fish with a whole bunch of people there." (C5)*

The ability to set up a traditional camp is also of concern, not only related to having to comply with provincial campsite rules (e.g., fees, designated area). The experience will be severely compromised, if not rendered meaningless, for it would no longer be a *Denesuline* camp with all the freedom and associated cultural activities and practices that are so entailed.

*"Well once they develop it there's always rules to follow. And I don't deny that you need rules to keep order and keep things clean. I believe that's needed, but not at the expense of a freedom that has been here for eons." (C5)*

*"I don't know, if this park goes ahead, I don't know what Cold Lake First Nations would do, or how will First Nations have opportunities to go there? We have to pay to go sleep, camp out anywhere, as before it was free. I know a lot of First Nations people wouldn't pay \$15 or \$20 a night just to go to sleep if you can't hunt or pick berries and all that." (C16)*

*"I don't feel good about any development because we are denied access every time they develop something. If they make a park our access is denied. We have already had experience with that. We have already lost I would say 99% of our homeland, after the air weapons range. Ninety-nine percent of what was left after the 1950s we have lost to municipalities, to parks, to industry, to whoever. And I don't agree with the development at Berry Point, period, because we won't have access there. Not the access that we knew, anyway... The freedom that we had on our land. The freedom of not needing permission and not being afraid to harvest off of our lands." (C5)*

Related to this, is the concern that permission or permits to conduct activities may be required, which is in fundamental opposition to *Denesutline* relationships with *the land* as the original people. Moreover, it would simply not be practical in terms of how people actually go out on *the land* and would create additional burdens for Cold Lake First Nations members.

*"They'll be upset because in my mind I would think "why am I getting a permit when its my territory of hunting, fishing and hunting for berries?" (C13/RM)*

*"You think I'm going to hitchhike all the way to Le Goff and sign my name because I'm going to go there to pick berries for a couple of hours, I don't think so... Am I going to go over there to ask permission to pick medicine on that point?" (C10/RM)*

*"If you plan to go somewhere over here today, and you plan to go for berries tomorrow and you're ready today, and tomorrow what if it rains and then it has to be postponed until a better day and wait until the ground is dry, it could take a couple of days, so it's not a planned thing." (C10/RM)*

In the eyes of Cold Lake First Nations members, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is being destroyed for no real purpose at the expense of *Denesutline* people and the continued ability to maintain an enduring and meaningful relationship with a sacred ancestral place, now and into the future,

*"[The future for my children is] [g]rim. Because if they are trying to open up spots for RVs, showers, all these things, it is going to take up a lot of land. They will be destroying a lot of the land to make way for the development of all these places. For a bigger RV parking lot, they are going to be needing a way bigger yard than this complex here. They are going to be needing a way bigger area. So there goes maybe an acre of land there no problem just to make way for the RVS. And they are going to have water and stuff like that for showers and whatnot. I find that they are destroying something there that doesn't have to be destroyed... The people that stayed out at Blueberry Point that were utilizing the camping ground; non-Aboriginal people, they were also coming in there and supporting us and saying I don't know why the government is trying to make it bigger. It's just fine the way it is; it was just fine the way it was... they are destroying something that doesn't have to be destroyed. It was nice. All these people are coming there and saying it was nice. And not once did I ever ever see that all 40 stalls occupied! Not once! I have never seen all [stalls] used. The most I ever seen was 10, maybe 12 and that was it. Nothing major. I don't know why they are trying to make something bigger when it's barely ever been used. If you asked anyone that goes up there on a regular basis how many people did you actually see camping there at one given time, they will say the same thing. The people that do go camping out there will stay separated, far away from each other." (C4)*

*"They are destroying something that doesn't have to be messed with. They should have just left it there they way it was. They said their consultation procedure was met, and they didn't even do nothing! They didn't consult with us or anything like that. They just started going at it; just destroying the land. Destroying whatever they think will be necessary to benefit them." (C4)*

*"[T]here's enough recreational areas for non-residents or for people that are living here. I'm speaking of non-Native people. I think there's enough recreation areas... and more development is just greed. And but speaking from the earth's point of view and natural world's point of view, I think it should just be left in its natural state because it's a beautiful place. We're not going to have any of those places, but the redevelopment of the park, I think it's just greed... It's beautiful the way it is."* (C5)

On a more practical and personal level, members of Cold Lake First Nations are concerned that with construction and expansion of English Bay Recreation Area, there will be more people and more boat traffic on Cold Lake leading to greater chance of vandalism of nets and the need for Cold Lake First Nations members to stay present where their nets are set (which requires setting up camp).

*"[T]here will be more boats. There will be more people. Already our nets aren't safe in the water when you have drunken boaters flying around cutting up nets and stuff like that. You'd have more of that. You'd have to camp there and watch your nets for sure; you can't put a net in there and then go home and come back. You've got to stay there and watch it otherwise it will be vandalized. It will be destroyed."* (C5)

*"You would have sea-doods, and swimmers and scuba divers and everything getting tangled in my nets because I would be fishing in front of them no matter what. It's my right and I exercise my right to the fullest extent... it wouldn't be my fault because they were getting tangled in my net, or swimmers; either that or my equipment would be destroyed by boats that are racing up and down the lake that have no respect for our livelihood."* (C9)

*"Overpopulation. With people being there in the summertime, the boat launch will be overwhelmed. I won't be able to go set a net on the lake from the boat launch like I used to be able to... I won't be able to set a net because like I said before, the boats don't really care about anybody's nets in the water."* (C4)

*"We the entire community have a right to fish for food. If they have a boat launch there with 200 boats, how is a net going to survive the evening?"* (C9/RM)

The condition of the lake itself is also of concern, as increased recreational use will contribute additional pollutants into the water, affecting fish and water resources.

*"This is the main thing that is going to be affected. This. The Lake. The most damage they will do here, to this lake... Polluting it, destroying it, destroying the fish, the water that we drink. When you go to the dock now in Cold Lake, you see where all the boats are. There's oil, black. They can't tell me that they clean that water... The food that we eat from the lake is going to be all gone. That is what bothers me the most. That this whole area developed – can you imagine all the boats that will be sitting here and all the pollution? It will come over here where we can't fish anymore. That's what bothers me the most is the water."* (C7)

## **6.4 Summary of Specific Anticipated Impacts of Campground Construction**

A summary of specific anticipated impacts of the proposed English Bay Recreation Area campground construction and expansion includes but is not limited to the following:

- Increased numbers and presence of recreational land users (campers, boaters and potentially day use visitors such as picnickers and, especially if walking trails are developed, walkers, joggers and bikers);
- Additional lands will be taken up and physically altered for campground use (e.g., additional parking stalls, roads, walking trails, etc.);
- Management rules on use such as restrictions on where and when camping can occur, the use of off road vehicles, restrictions on hunting and gathering, fees for camping, restrictions on the use of fires, etc.

Based on the experiences and views of Cold Lake First Nations members about impacts past and present in relation to similar types of encroachments, and on concerns expressed about English Bay Recreation Area campground construction and redevelopment, it can be expected that the following impacts will be experienced should that expansion and redevelopment proceed as planned:

- Increased numbers of recreational land users will further exacerbate impacts already experienced, to the the ability of Cold Lake First Nations members to use *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* for berry-picking, medicinal plant gathering. Hunting and fishing.
- Increased number of boaters accessing the area due to expansion of boat launch as well as increased camping capacity will increase risk of damage to nets and interference with Cold Lake First Nations subsistence fishing activities, leading to Cold Lake First Nations members avoidance of use and/or to conflict with recreational users.
- The use and value of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* for the harvest of medicinal resources, berry resources and other plant resources may be impacted by clearing activities (which physically remove or destroy plants).
- Increased presence of recreational land users, as well as aesthetic changes to the quality of the place, will interfere with the experience of solitude and peace, and the “*spirit of the land*” that is important for spiritual practice, prayer, ceremony and healing, eroding the ability of Cold Lake First Nations members to continues such activities at *Jié Houchálá*.
- Increased presence and activities of recreational land users will interact negatively with *Denesuline* needs to feel free from risk of interference and abuse while conducting traditional activities such as camping/living on the land, gathering or ceremonies, diminishing the ability of Cold Lake First Nations members to continue such activities at *Jié Houchálá*.
- Management rules and restrictions on use will directly interfere with customary and preferred *Denesuline* patterns of use and occupancy and will ultimately discourage use of *Jié Houchálá* by Cold Lake First Nations members. For example:
- Cold Lake First Nations *Denesuline* are highly unlikely to request permission, apply for a permit, or provide notification (should any of these be required) to conduct cultural activities. This is so for a number of reasons.
  - First, It is an affront to the inherent rights and responsibilities vested by the Creator in the *Denesuline* as *keepers of the land*. Many Cold Lake First Nations *Denesuline* will not accept imposed restrictions because *Denesuline*, as the *original people*, do not require permission to be *on the land*. The expectation is demeaning and disrespectful of *Denesuline* as the *original people*. Moreover, the idea of getting permission to *be on our land* if that restriction was accepted, weakens the very core of the relationship with the *land*.
  - Second, the requirement to do so (or being approached by a land manager inquiring about whether the requirement has been fulfilled) is experienced and interpreted as an affront to the treaty relationship between Cold Lake First Nations and the Crown.
  - Third, for those *Denesuline* who tend to avoid conflict, or those whose experience with “*white*” people has been largely negative, they may restrict their activities where they expect they may be challenged.
  - Moreover, going out on the land is not a “planned” activity; it often occurs spontaneously, or, if there is a plan in place, plans tend to change frequently and without warning. Having to fill out any required paperwork beforehand, or to indicate set dates for activities is prohibitive and unlikely to be done.



- The use of fire is critical and integral to the essence, custom, comfort and utility of a *Denesuline* camp. Cooking is preferentially done over the fire. Fires are also critical for *thanking the ancestors*, and the processing of fish and game. Smoke fish and dry meat are cured over the smoke from an “open” (but contained within a tarp) fire. Restrictions on the use of fire, including restrictions on the containment of fires (e.g., fires only allowed in facilities provided), severely interfere with the meaningfulness of activities associated with a *Denesuline* camp.

## 6.5 The Significance of Impacts to Traditional Occupancy and Use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*

As articulated in the foregoing, Cold Lake First Nations *Denesuline* have serious concerns about existing impacts to the occupancy, use, and enjoyment of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* and the implications of further impacts should expansion and redevelopment of the English Bay Recreation Area Park proceed as planned.

Viewed in their entirety, despite the position of some members of the Nation that they will never stop using *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, these impacts, on their own and/or in combination, will render this sacred ancestral *living on the land gathering area* unfit for meaningful *Denesuline* occupancy and customary activities and practices.

Loss of use of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* will be a significant cultural impact for Cold Lake First Nations *Denesuline*. The historical and cultural and significance of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* in conjunction with its unique qualities as a place from which to derive a *Denesuline* livelihood is one matter. It is highly unlikely that transferring traditional occupancy and use to another area would be an acceptable or a meaningful replacement for this specific ancestral (sacred) area. Nor is it even likely possible in consideration of the cumulative encroachments throughout *Denne Ni Nenné* and especially given the existing encroachments on lands surrounding *Louwe Chok Touwe (Cold Lake)*. Between provincial parks, housing developments, the City of Cold Lake, and industrial developments, there are few undeveloped or unencumbered lands and Cold Lake First Nations reserve lands are not sufficiently large to satisfy land and resource use requirements for the Nation now and into the future.

*Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is one of the last remaining places that is easily accessible to the Nation and of great cultural, historical and spiritual value by virtue of its continuous and longstanding occupancy and use by Cold Lake First Nations *Denesuline*. Moreover, within the entirety of *Denne Ni Nenné*, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* has been identified as one of only a few ancestral *living on the land places* conducive to sustaining extensive *Denesuline* family occupancy and harvesting since *time immemorial* by the Nation as such. Today, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is the only one which remains relatively intact and available for *Denesuline* customary use. Suckerville on Primrose Lake was severed from the Nation with the creation of the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (Appendix 1). On the shores of Cold Lake, Willow Point and French Bay were severed with the creation of provincial parks. More recently the intact lands north shore of Cold Lake were taken up by the creation of another provincial park and industrial activities related to oil sands development.

*“Well in Primrose, at Hoka, we have such limited access there... it’s pretty sad for us when we get very limited access and it’s in the bombing area, so you know... despite our attempts to have the areas protected there, we haven’t been able to protect any areas. So as it stands we only get the access once a year, then the rest of the year there’s bombing activity in that area. It doesn’t... it’s not good for our culture, for our way of life. That area should definitely be protected for us, and have our year round use there. Then at French Bay, Long Bay, there’s a lot of camping and whatnot there. There’s still pretty good wildlife areas there, and fishing, but even there we have no set aside areas or anything for us, even though it’s a very important area and its very historically populated and settled area for our people. Same with Suckerville, same with English Bay, they’re all historically very populated and well used.(C17)*

In combination with cumulative encroachments on *Denne Ni Nenné* as a whole, and the resultant increasing diminishment of CLFN's ability to access, use and occupy traditional lands, impacts to the use and occupancy of *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* can be expected to further erode Cold Lake First Nations' ability to exercise their treaty rights and traditional uses upon which their mode of life, their culture and their identity are dependent. Cold Lake First Nations members predict that, should their ability to access, use and occupy *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* in the means which they prefer, be diminished or destroyed, that there will be no (meaningful) place left for them to go and that this will have consequences for their ability to continue their traditional way of life.

*"It will be gone. That will be it. That's the last of the last, it's like a little bowl, after that bowl is gone, we've got nothing, nothing. After that, what will we do? Try to co-exist with the white man? They don't believe what we believe. They already tried to make us farmers. We are not farmers. We are nomadic people."* (C10/RM).

Traditional land use and occupancy activities are necessary to maintain the relationship of CLFN to the land, a relationship that is fundamental to CLFN culture, identity and well-being. Impacts to traditional land use and occupancy can have secondary impacts on the ability of the Nations' individuals, families and communities to transmit (teach and learn) cultural and traditional knowledge and traditional values; on individual, family and community health and well-being; and, ultimately, on the overall ability of the Nation to sustain its traditional mode of life and their culture which is tied with that mode of life.

Without continued use of places such as *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point*, Cold Lake First Nations is at risk of no longer being able to practice their traditional activities upon which their mode of life and culture is based. Cold Lake First Nations members have likened this to "cultural genocide".

*"Well I see that... among all the other places that have been lost, this will be a very... one of the most important areas that have been in lost, then you come to more and more cultural genocide. It's already taken place throughout... since contact. At least we always had land, now we're running out of land and areas."* (C17)

*"With nothing, what are we going to do?... A lot of the white man how they live, its not how we believe... they tried to make us farmers, where's the great big farmers? We are nomadic, food bearing, native people. That's what we are."* (C10)

## 7 CONCLUSION

As evidenced in the information from interviews and associated mapped information presented in Section 5 of this report, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is an area of long-standing (past and present) use and occupancy that is significant to Cold Lake First Nations. *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a place where Cold Lake First Nations members continue to:

- Harvest and process fish for food purposes;
- Harvest moose and rabbits for food purposes;
- Harvest berries for food purposes; and,
- Harvest plants for medicines for health and ceremonial purposes.

Furthermore, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a cultural hub where Cold Lake First Nations members continue to:

- Frequent it to promote cultural continuity and identity through:
  - Intergenerational transmission (teaching) of traditional knowledge and traditional activities;
  - Intergenerational transmission of history, ancestry and culture; and,
  - Holding social and cultural gatherings.
- Use it for family social purposes.

Finally, *Jié Houchálá/Berry Point* is a sacred place to Cold Lake First Nations as an area where:

- The ancestors have lived and where their spirits are present;
- There are burial sites; and,
- Members go for healing, to reconnect with themselves and the land, and to conduct ceremonies.

The unique qualities of this area that make it especially important to Cold Lake First Nations are that:

- It is valued and enjoyed by families from all of the Cold Lake First Nations communities (English Bay, Le Goff, Little Cold Lake Town);
- There is a strong historic and ancestral connection with the place;
- It is highly accessible to Cold Lake First Nations members and families;
- It is an extremely productive fishing area;
- It is located on Cold Lake, itself a significant cultural and sacred place for the Nation; and,
- It is a rich and diverse area that supports multiple traditional use activities.

In assessing impacts of the proposed English Bay Recreation Area expansion and development, it is important to take the entire contextual setting into account. This contextual setting is described in Section 3 and can be summarized as follows:

- The traditional livelihood, mode of life and unique *Denesutine* culture of Cold Lake First Nations is dependent upon access to sufficient quality and quantity of lands and resources within *Denne Ni Nenné*.
- Cold Lake First Nations has experienced historic and continuing encroachment on *Denne Ni Nenné* and the lands and resources necessary to support traditional land use activities.
- The process of colonization itself has had impacts on Cold Lake First Nations' ability to pursue traditional activities and on cultural identity.
- Cold Lake First Nations has a deep-rooted distrust of government as a result of what they have experienced as a history of broken promises.
- While Cold Lake First Nations is in a process of cultural regeneration and recovery with cultural protection and promotion efforts in place, this process requires continuation of access to lands and resources necessary to support the traditional use and occupancy activities that are necessary for cultural identity and continuation.

## 8 FINAL STATEMENT

*Dene' sulia' ne Yabni si Ya Ti<sup>16</sup>*  
*Denesuline (Chipewyan) History*

*Yedari ye nuba nubni niniral Bay t'da Di ya dta ha*

### A DECLARATION

*We are the Denesuline members of Cold Lake (Luc chok tue hots!). The Creator has given us this territory and culture for self-determination and livelihood.*

*We Denesuline are the keepers of this territory having been put here by the Creator. We Denesuline live in harmony with nature of the land given to us since time immemorial.*

*The natural laws of this territory define our rights and responsibilities. Our language, our culture, and a place on Mother Earth that provides us with all our needs. We have maintained our freedom, our livelihood, and our traditions since creation as a Dene people. We continue to exercise the rights and fulfill our responsibilities and obligations.*

*Denesuline have an inherent right to govern ourselves. Rights and responsibilities given to us by the Creator cannot be altered or taken away by another made Nation.*

*We cannot exist as Denesuline without our territories, and our ability to exercise who we are upon those territories, intact.*

*The ability to exercise and to continue as Denesuline is undeniably dependent upon the respect of Natural Laws and access to a viable land base (Nu Nenne) with all its resources. One of our unique responsibilities in this declaration that guides our conscious actions today is our responsibility to ensure that all our future children have everything they need to continue the Denesuline ways of living as our people have done since time immemorial.*

*Today many non-Denesuline parties are moving into and using our traditional territories. As a result, we are unable to exercise our inherent rights and responsibilities, to pass on our way of life to our children and those yet to be born.*

*It is apparent to Denesuline that we are forced into a corner that we cannot escape. Today, we the Denesuline declare "enough is enough, this should not continue". It is time that our territories are protected so that we may have a chance of maintaining our livelihood and restoring our dignity in the future.*

---

<sup>16</sup> The above declaration was drafted by consensus amongst the study participants who requested that it be included in this report. See section 3.1.2.

## 9 REFERENCES CITED

- Battiste, M. and J. Youngblood Henderson  
2000 *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage*. Purich Publishing Ltd.: Saskatoon, SK.
- Blondin, G.  
1990 *When the World Was New*. Outcrop Communications Ltd., Yellowknife, NWT.
- Brody, Hugh  
1981 *Maps and Dreams*. Douglas & McIntyre: Vancouver, BC.
- Cajete, Gregory  
2000 *Native Science: Natural Laws of Interdependence*. Clear Light Publishers: Santa Fe, NM.
- Coutu, P. R. and L Hoffman-Mecredi  
1999 *Inkonze: The Stones of Traditional Knowledge: A History of Northeastern Alberta*. Thunderwoman Ethnographics: Edmonton, AB.
- Cruikshank, J.  
2000 *The Social Life of Stories*. University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln, NB.  
2005 *Do Glaciers Listen?: Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters & Social Imagination*. UBC Press, Vancouver.
- Dickason, O. P.  
1992 *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK
- Eias, P.  
2004 "Standards for Aboriginal Cultural Research in Forest Management Planning in Canada". Report prepared for Canada's Model Strategic Initiative.
- Graham, J., B. Kulle, and E.J. McCullough  
2006 Historical Resources Impact Assessment Alberta Community Development Parks and Protected Areas English Bay Campground Expansion Cold Lake, Alberta Final Report. Consultant's Report prepared by Nunne-AXYS Inc. in association with FMA Heritage Consultants Inc. for Alberta Community Development Parks and Protected Areas, on file with the Historic Resources Management Branch of Alberta Culture and Community Spirit.
- Fedirchuk, G. J.  
2010 French Bay. FMA Heritage Inc., Consultant Report on File, AB
- Freeman, M. ed.  
1976 Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project. Minister of Supply and Services Canada. Ottawa, ON.
- Fumoleau, R.  
1976 *As Long As This Land Shall Last: A History of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, 1870 – 1939*. McClelland & Stewart: Toronto, ON.

- Government of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)  
1996a Looking Forward, Looking Back, Vol. 1.  
1996b Perspectives and Realities, "Elders' Perspectives," Vol. 4.
- Hildebrandt, W. and S. Thorpe  
1993 Oral and Archival History Cold Lake Provincial Park. Prepared for Alberta Parks Service and the Cold Lake First Nation.
- Indian Claims Commission (ICC)  
1994 "Cold Lake and Canoe Lake (Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range) Inquiries," *Indian Claims Commission Proceedings 1*. Ministry of Supply and Services Canada. Ottawa, On.
- Johnson, Harold  
2007 *Two Families: Treaties and Government*. Purich Publishing Limited, Saskatoon, SK.
- Kulchyski, P.  
1998 "Bush/Lands: Some Problems with Defining the Sacred." In *Sacred Lands: Aboriginal World Views, Claims, and Conflicts*, edited by J. R. Oakes, J.R. Riewe and K. Kinew. Canadian Circumpolar Institute: Edmonton, AB.
- Lackenbauer, W. P.  
2007 *Battle Grounds: The Canadian Military and Aboriginal Lands*. UBC Press, Vancouver, B.C.
- Legal, E. J.  
1914 *Short Sketches of the History of the Catholic Churches and Missions in Central Alberta*. Edmonton Diocese, Edmonton, AB.
- Manuel, G. and M. Posluns  
1974 *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality*. Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd., Don Mills. ON
- McCullough, E. J. and M. C. Wilson  
1982 *A Prehistoric Settlement – Subsistence Model for Northeastern Alberta, Canstar Oil Sands Ltd. Bitumount Sands Leases 33, 92, and 95: A Preliminary Statement*.
- McGillivray, W. B, R. Hastings, M. Steinhilber  
1994 "Natural History of the Winefred Lake Region, East-central Alberta." *Provincial Museum of Alberta, Natural History Occasional Paper*, No. 18, Edmonton, AB.
- Morris, A.  
1979 *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories, Including the Negotiations on Which they Were Based, and Other Information Relating Thereto*. Reprint, Coles Publishing Company, originally published 1862. Toronto, ON.
- Natcher, D. C.  
2000 "Land Use Research and the Duty to Consult: A Misrepresentation of the Aboriginal Landscape." *Sustainable Forest Management Network*. pp.113-122.
- Natural Resources Canada  
2008 *Canadian Watersheds*. Natural Resources Canada, Canada Centre for Remote Sensing. Ottawa, ON.
- Osum Oil Sands Corp.  
2009 Osum Taiga Project. Public Disclosure Document, Osum Oil Sands Ltd., Calgary, AB.
- Parker, J. M. and K. W. Tingley  
1980 "A History of the Athabasca Oilsands Region, 1890 to 1960". Prepared for Alberta Oil Sands Environmental Research Program (AEOSERP): Edmonton, AB.

- Petitot, E.  
1883 "On the Athapaska District of the Canadian Northwest Territories." *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. 5:634-635.
- Ray, A. J.  
2005 *I Have Lived Here Since The World Began: An Illustrated History of Canada's Native People, Revised Edition*. Key Porter Books: Toronto, ON.
- Ray, A. J., J. Miller, and F. Tough  
2000 *Bounty and Benevolence: A History of Saskatchewan Treaties*. McGill-Queen's University Press. Montreal, QC
- Richardson, J.  
1829 *Fauna Boreali-Americana; or the Zoology of the Northern Parts of British America: Containing Descriptions of the Objects of Natural History Collected on the Late Northern Land Expeditions Under Command of Captain Sir John Franklin, R. N. Part 1*. John Murray: London, ON.
- Ross, M. L.  
2005 *First Nations Sacred Sites in Canada's Courts*. UBC Press, Vancouver.
- Tobias, T. N.  
2000 *Chief Kerry's Moose: A guidebook to Land Use and Occupancy Mapping, Research Design and Data Collection*. Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs and Ecotrust, Vancouver, BC.
- 2009 *Living Proof: The Essential Date-Collection Guide for Indigenous Use-And-Occupancy Map Surveys*. Ecotrust Canada and Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, Vancouver, BC.
- Turner, N. J., I J. Davidson-Hunt, M. O'Flaherty  
2003 "Living on the Edge: Ecological and Cultural Edges as Sources of Diversity for Social-Ecological Resilience." *Human Ecology*, Vol. 31, No. 3.
- Usher, P. J.  
2000 "Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Environmental Assessment and Management." *Arctic*, Vol. 53, No, pp. 183-193.
- Venne, S.  
1997 "Understanding Treaty 6: An Indigenous Perspective." In Asch, M., *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada: Essays on Law, Equality, and Respect for Difference*, UBC Press, Vancouver..
- Weinstein, Martin S.  
1976 *What the Land Provides: An Examination of the Fort George Subsistence Economy and the Possible Consequences on it by the James Bay Hydroelectric Project*. Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec).
- Wyatt, S, J. Fortier, G. Greskiw, M Hebert, S. Nadeau,, D. Natcher, P. Smith, D. Theberge, R. Trospen  
2010 *Can Aboriginal Land Use and Occupancy Studies Be Applied Effectively in Forest Management: A State of Knowledge Report*. Sustainable Forest Management Network, Edmonton, AB

## 9.1 Internet

- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. 2011. Cold Lake First Nations Registered Population as of November, 2011. First Nations Profiles [website]



[http://pse5-esd5.ainc-inac.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND\\_NUMBER=464&lang=eng](http://pse5-esd5.ainc-inac.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=464&lang=eng).

