



## Pimachiowin Aki World Heritage Project Research Summary Land Tenure

Anishinaabe land tenure of the Pimachiowin Aki area is rooted in kinship, and in the clan (doodem) system and takes the form of a mosaic of family hunting and trapping areas widely distributed across the area under consideration for a UNESCO World Heritage site nomination.

This system is also spatially and institutionally overlaid by provincial trapline systems in the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba, as well as other evolving natural resource tenure institutions. The pre-existing Anishinaabe system, however, was not simply replaced by the state natural resource tenure system, nor can it be conceptualized as a static set of land tenure traditions.

While academic debates about Anishinaabe land tenure have had a narrow focus on rights to land, these territories have also been understood to house a great deal of complexity and flexibility to adapt to cultural and ecological drivers of change, including economic conditions of trade, availability of food and resources for exchange, social upheaval related to increased government presence in the north and state resource management, and evolution of new land-based economic activities.

Characterization of Anishinaabe land tenure is best achieved through the study of interactions between the Anishinaabe and Euro-Canadian systems. A range of institutions and practices are involved in the continuity and evolution of this land tenure system where the contemporary system can be understood to be clearly neither one nor the other. The key role of stewards in Anishinaabe family areas provides a critical link to understanding past and present roles of this land tenure system.

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