

fishing areas also continue around the **Wreck Point** and **Northern Head** area and as well off of the **Port Morien** coast to **Phalen's Bar** and **South Head**.

Crab, *Mnjnikej*, is also a significant species that is fished by the Mi'kmaq in the waters throughout the study area, although not to the extent that Lobster is harvested. The primary area that the Mi'kmaq people continue to harvest crab is primarily in the waters around **Glance Bay** through to **Mira Bay** and as well off the **Donkin** coast. As well, **Urchin** harvesting is also undertaken off of the waters of **Glance Bay** and also at **Port Morien** to **Phalen's Bay**.

Mackerel, *Amelamow*, trout, *atoqqwa'su*, cod, *peju*, and **eel, *katew*** are also harvested by the Mi'kmaq throughout some of the waters surrounding the study area. The coastal waters around **Donkin** are harvested for **scallops** and **cod *peju*** and the **Schooner Pond** area is also fished for **mackerel, *Amelamow* cod, *peju***, and some **trout, *atoqqwa'su***. Inland at **Sand Lake**, Mi'kmaq have also fished for **eel, *katew*** and **salmon, *plamu*** here.

Food Sustenance – Game, Deer, Moose, Small Game

With regards to game resources, the study data identified a minimal amount of hunting activity in the study area. It appears that there has been some **deer, *lentuk*** hunting done here, although it is minimal. Also, **rabbit, *apli'kmuj*** and **partridge, *plawej*** are harvested by Mi'kmaq here too, although again at a minimal extent.

Medicinal/Food/Spiritual Plants



The Mi'kmaq people utilize many plant resources for food, medicinal and spiritual resources. The study data supported this and identified that within the **Donkin** area the Mi'kmaq continue to utilize many of the plant resources found here, primarily for food and medicine. Blackberries, blueberries, cranberries and raspberries are all harvested here for food. With regards to medicinal plants, these are also found to grow throughout the study area, as was identified in our extensive site visits, and interviews. Some of the medicinal plants identified include **balsam, cherry bark, cow parsnip, *pako'si*, flagroot, *ki'kwesu'skl*, tamerak, yarrow, dogwood, *wjculjemusi*, and golden thread, *wisswtaqji'jkl*** Some of these plants were also harvested in other areas as well, such as **Glance Bay** and **Schooner Pond**, however to a much lesser degree than that which occurred in the Donkin Study area. Also, we found that the Mi'kmaq harvest **sweet grass, *switte'***, in a few of the coastal

areas surrounding **Big Glace Bay** through to **Schooner Pond** and cedar, *sqasqusi*, in the area of **Donkin**.

Tools/Art

The Mi'kmaq people not only utilize natural resources for food and medicine, but also for the construction of various tools and for aesthetic purposes of artwork. The study data findings identified that in the area of **Port Morien** Mi'kmaq have used this area for the harvesting of **ash trees**, and some **maple** as well. Also, **Flint Island** has also been utilized for the flint stones that are found here.



Burials/Occupation

The Mi'kmaq people are the indigenous people of the present day Atlantic Canada area, and as such have lived throughout much of its' entirety. With regards to the study area, it is very probable that Mi'kmaq would have occupied this area at times during the seasons while harvesting fish and other resources. However, based on archival research and present day interviews, this study was unable to identify any burials of Mi'kmaq found here.

4.5 **Mi'kmaq Significant Species Process**

In order to identify possible project effects which may be of significance to Mi'kmaq land, water and/or resource use, two primary factors are considered by this study in relation to the findings of the Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge gathered.

Availability and Importance

The main factor that is considered in determining significance is the **Availability** of the resource identified. If a resource is identified as one which is harvested within the study area, the study then considers whether the resource is abundant in the study area or whether it is rare or scarce. Also, based on information that is made available from the ecological knowledge holders and/or written literature sources, the availability of the resource is then considered in the scope of other water or land areas that are outside of the study area. This is done for the areas adjacent to the study area, and as well throughout other Nova Scotian lands. By proceeding in this manner, the study has the ability to closely identify whether a resource is rare or scarce or abundant. This can then allow the study team to form

an opinion on whether a resource may be irrevocably harmed if it is destroyed by the development activities being proposed.

The second factor considered when attempting to identify the significance of a resource to Mi'kmaq use is whether the resource is of major **Importance** to Mi'kmaq traditional use activities. This can be a somewhat subjective process, as any traditional resource use will be of importance to the individual who is acquiring it, regardless if its' use is for food or art. However, the study also utilizes other factors to identify importance, such as the frequency of the use, whether it is commonly used by more than one individual, and then the use itself. Again, this allows the team to identify whether the loss of a resource will cause irrevocable harm to Mi'kmaq use, if destroyed by the project activities.

Type of Use

Prior to measuring the availability and importance of a resource, the study considers the resources that have been identified in the study and categorizes them in two manners:

First, all findings are identified into various general categories regarding the **Type of Use**. General headings are used, instead of specific resource heading, so as to ensure further confidentiality with respect to each specific resource and the area where it is harvested. As well, the total number of instances where a resource harvest has been documented by the study is quantified here as well.

**Food/Sustenance,
Medicinal/Ceremonial,
Tool/Art**

It is then that the team begins to consider this data in accordance with its Availability:

Rare – only known to be found in a minimum of areas, may also be on the species at risk or endangered plants list

Common – known to be available in a number of areas

Abundant – easily found throughout the study area or in other areas in the vicinity.

Final consideration is to then to take the use and availability and formulate an opinion as to whether a resource will be affected.

4.6 Mi'kmaq Significance Species Findings

This MEKS identified numerous resource and land/water areas within the study area, and adjacent to the study area, that continue to be utilized by the Mi'kmaq

people. The data was not only gathered within the Donkin study area, but also throughout a 10 kilometer buffer zone surrounding the immediate study area.

The study identified the following:

Type Of Use	Number of Sites or Areas	Number of Distinct Species
Food/Sustenance	128	14
Medicinal/Ceremonial	15	12
Tool/Art	4	4

The above data findings were then considered within the parameters of its availability as found within the study area, the 10 kilometer buffer zone around the study area and then throughout the province.

When considering the plant and tree resources documented by the study, the majority of these can be classified as commonly available, if not in the study area, than throughout other areas of Nova Scotia. This included such plants as **Cow Parsnip**, *Pako'si*, **Golden Thread**, *Wisswtaqi'jkl*, **Flagroot**, *Ki'kwesu'sk*, and **Sweetgrass**, (*Hierochloe odorata L.*) *Switte'*. None of the plants which we documented within this study are identified on the provincial Species at Risk list.

The majority of these plants are considered to be very important resources in relation to traditional use in the Mi'kmaq community, but because of their availability, any effects from the project activities should be minimal.

With regards to the food resources, the most significant resource that was documented within this study was **lobster**, *jakej*, and as well as **crab**, *mnjinikej*, and **urchin**. Some of the Unama'ki Mi'kmaq communities utilize the waters off of **Donkin**, **Big Glace Bay** through to **Borden's Head** for their commercial lobster fisheries. Since the Supreme Court decision; *Marshall v. The Queen*, the Mi'kmaq have relied on such fisheries for a large component of their economic development and sustainability. Because the project may eventually consider accessing coal mine deposits that are stored off-shore and in the area of such fishing grounds, at that time it would be recommended that the Mi'kmaq communities be involved and consulted, as their aboriginal fishing rights could be affected.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

This MEKS considered the traditional use activities that have, and continue to be undertaken by the Mi'kmaq people within the study area of the Donkin Coal Resource Feasibility Project. The project undertook interviews with Mi'kmaq people and also considered literature research so as to identify Mi'kmaq past and present use in the area. Based on the data findings, the Mi'kmaq people continue to undertake some traditional activities within the study area, and within the surrounding 10 kilometre buffer zone, however such activity is minimal. Although data showed that resource use within the study area is minimal and primarily plants, the data also showed that the coastal waters surrounding the Donkin area and Big Glace Bay continue to be an important water resource area for the Mi'kmaq, primarily for lobster and crab harvesting.

Because this phase of the project is only considering the feasibility of developing the coal resource mines that are located in Donkin, it is the teams opinion that the traditional use that occurs in the coastal waters should be minimally affected by the project, as at this stage the project will not be undertaken any activities in these waters. However, any future operations of the Donkin coal mine in this area should be brought to the Mi'kmaq leadership for discussion, as depending on the project activities, there is the potential for effects on the Mi'kmaq lobster or crab fishery which would involve s.35 constitutionally protected aboriginal rights.

