



Lead Author e-mail: Chris.Southcott@lakeheadu.ca

Title: *Resources, Arctic Communities, and Sustainability: Towards a New Relationship*

Chris Southcott¹

¹*Lakehead University, Sociology, Lakehead University, 955 Oliver Rd. Thunder Bay ON Canada P7B5E1*

Resource exploitation remains the primary source of potential economic and social sustainability of northern communities. Yet while Arctic northern resources have the potential to produce great wealth in the future, past experience has showed that these communities have benefited little from resource exploitation. Indeed, Arctic communities have experienced enormous social and economic challenges over the past century and these challenges can be closely linked to impacts of past resource exploitation. There is some indication that the worst aspects of resource dependence can be countered through the introduction of new policies and models of development that increase local control and ensure a higher share of resource rents are passed on to communities. New land claim agreements, impact-benefit agreements, and co-management boards offer the potential for the development of natural resources in the Arctic in a manner that increases the benefits of these developments for local communities and helps ensure that development is done in an environmentally sound manner. The Resources and Sustainable Development in the Arctic (ReSDA) project brings together researchers and community representatives to conduct and mobilize research aimed at the sustainable development of Arctic natural resources in a manner that will improve the health and well-being of northern communities while preserving the region's unique environment. This presentation will discuss the initial findings of this international multi-disciplinary project.