

**NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program
Capacity Building and Monitoring Projects**

**Dehcho First Nations
Youth Winter Camp
March 19 – 23, 2007**

Contact Information:

Lee Maria Thom
A/ Resource Management Coordinator
P.O Box 89
Fort Simpson, NT X0E 0N0
Lee_Thom@Dehchofirstnations.com
Phone: (867) 695-2355
Fax: (867) 695 – 2038

Background

The Dehcho First Nations in partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources hosted a youth winter camp. The camp was in the traditional area of the Dehcho Dene at Willow Lake located in the Horn Plateau. Unfortunately, Resource staff from EnR was unable to attend the camp due to other departmental commitments

Combining traditional knowledge with modern day technology, 8 representatives from the Dehcho traveled via snowmobile from Fort Simpson to Fort Providence. This provided the youth an opportunity to see the area that their ancestors once traveled and lived. They traveled to Willow Lake with an Elder and traditional harvester. They instructed the youth on traditional skills. The youth were familiar with the use of GPS and recorded their way points of travel.

In preparations for the trip, everyone met in Fort Simpson to ensure all equipment was working properly and everyone was well prepared. A safety meeting was held before they left. There was some trouble with equipment which delayed the trip by a day. Representatives from Fort Providence traveled to Willow Lake to meet with the group. The trip had two departure points. This allowed for more people to travel from Fort Providence.

Over rugged terrain and hip high snow they broke trail. The majority of the trip was spend traveling while observing the landmarks, animals tracks and trails, while sharing stories of previous experiences out on the land. Animal species of tracks identified were caribou, moose, wolves, martin, rabbit, lynx, and wolverine. Unfortunately the availability of game was not favorable and the youth didn't learn any hunting techniques with a firearm, which was most expected for a young man to be out on the land.

The first day was spent traveling to Jackfish Cabin. Because of the amount of snow, it took the whole day to get there. The second day they traveled to the cabins owned by Dehcho First Nations and spent the remainder of the week there.

The youth learned how to set a fish net under the ice. They also prepared a meal with the fish caught. Traditional Knowledge was observed when they decided where the best place to set a net. The elder also incorporated scientific knowledge by knowing how to prepare a fish. Where-as a scientist can dissect a fish for research. A traditional harvester would know if a fish was unhealthy just by look, touch or taste.

The Dehcho First Nations provided the use of the satellite phone, GPS and survival kit for the youth. Due to the limited space in toboggans, packing had to be light and limited to survival gear. The youth were provided with a list of what to pack. They were also responsible to purchase their own food, gas and supplies. While at the camp, they shared responsibilities of cook, maintenance and other chores.

The Dehcho First Nations and Environment and Natural Resources committed internal funding in addition to extensive in-kind support in utilizing staff and resources. This includes staffing hours for the preparation, planning and evaluation for the Youth Winter Camp. The event could not be held without the in kind support of administration, coordination and supplies required to obtain external funding.

The youth kept a journal of their daily activities. They recommend this trip be held again with more time to learn more skills and traditional knowledge. They would like to see more youth participate to be inspired to a career in the vast field of the environment.

The Dehcho First Nations Grand Chief, the Resource Management Coordinator, and CBC Reporter flew to the camp on Friday to interview the youth and elders. The youth were fortunate to have the Kakisa chief Lloyd Chicot accompany them on their journey. The story was featured on the World at six on CBC radio. This was aired on March 29, 2007. The Dehcho Drum also featured a story about the youth.

The youth experienced getting to know the land and learnt from each other. It also brings personal growth for the youth and a sense of identity with appreciation of the aboriginal culture, traditions and language. The success of the trip was a collaboration of all participants working together, communicating and problem solving. The youth overcame their challenge of getting there and will benefit from the wealth of knowledge he has gained through this short period of time with harvesters, leaders, elders and peers.

An audited financial statement will be forwarded on or before July 31, 2007. Pictures will be available once received by participants.

Camp Participants:

Jonas Antoine	Fort Simpson	Guide	Age: 66
Edward Cholo	Fort Simpson	Elder	Age: 57

Felix Isiah	Fort Simpson	Youth	Age: 26
Jordon Nahanni	Fort Simpson	Youth	Age: 15
Lloyd Chicot	Kakisa	Chief	Age: 45
George Simba	Kakisa	Youth	Age: 27
Derwin Cille	Wrigley	Youth	Age: 23
Dwight Norwegian	Wrigley	Youth	Age: 25
Crystal Gargan	Fort Providence	Youth	Age: 25
Jason Causa	Fort Providence	Youth	Age: 26
Clifford Vandell	Fort Providence		Age: 40
Ben Vandell	Fort Providence	Youth	Age: 13

Fort Providence Participants:

Brandon Matto
Eric Nadli
Ernest Nadli
Stuwart Nadli
Joshua Lesage
Billy Lesage
Terrance Squirrel

Budget:

REVENUE	Budget
NWT CIMP	\$ 19,000.00
EXPENDURES	
Sub-contractors	\$ 3,000.00
Office Supplies	\$ 495.76
Ski-doo rental	\$ 1,102.53
Repair and maintenance	\$ 349.41
Travel	\$ 2377.00
Accomodations	\$ 240.00
Mileage	\$ 9,465.24
Per diem	\$ 1,251.86
Childcare	\$ 350.00
Admin fee	\$ 1,900.00
Total	\$ 20531.80
Variance	(\$ 1,542.15)

Pictures:
See attached.

**Youth and Harvesters/ Elders
Cultural Tour of Edehzhie
March 19 – 23, 2007**

Grand Chief Herb Norwegian and Resource Manager Lee Thom of the Dehcho First Nations arranged funding and planned a grand tour (sovereignty) of Dehcho lands. The plan was to have representatives from each Dehcho First Nations and invitations were sent out. This tour follows DFN Leadership direction to return to traditional land use and to instruct youth by example and experience.

The Deh Gah Gotie First Nation participated in this tour. The tour had two departure points from Fort Simpson in the west and one from Fort Providence from the east. Meeting point was Willow Lake. As all plans go, there had to be several meetings, and prior purchases and other equipment preparations which were done the prior week.

March 19, 2007

All participants assembled and prepared for a 2pm departure. Final briefing was held at 1:30 pm. At the DFN Boardroom a plan was to travel 40 km this day, set up camp and spend the night. But because of the lateness of the day and other small other items to be taken care of decision was made to spend another night and leave at 8 am the next day.

March 20, 2007

With sleds loaded and last minute checks finally 8 skidoos departed at 8:30 am. Weather conditions were not ideal for travel on this day. Snow flurries and white out conditions made travel difficult and hard to see the trail along the river. After 1 hour had 20 minutes of travel the group had to leave the river and follow a bush trail that had not been use since Christmas. George Simba led the way and broke trail on this first day. 550 skandic 1/wide track is ideal for this type of travel. Others followed and Lloyd Chicot with another reliable 550 skandic trailed behind to assist any stragglers. Getting stuck was not uncommon, but with assistance from others travel was a good pace. The group made fire half way to White Fish Lake for lunch and a little rest. There was a lot of moose and caribou tracks along the way. This area is prime caribou habitat at this time of the year. Approximately 90 km from Fort Simpson we had a breakdown, Chicky Cholo's skidoo quit sparking and decision to leave the machine there was made. Chicky's gear had to be distributed on other sleds and doubled up on another skidoo. As all plans go, some necessary alterations had to be made. The group decided to bypass Big Island Lake route and travel to White Fish Lake to the cabin for the first night. Finally after 12 hours of travel the group arrived at White Fish Lake and cozy chateau. This was a long day but everyone held up real well. After supper of hot chicken soup (legs and rice) it was a good night of sleep.

March 21, 2007

Coffee, bacon and eggs, and some history of the area started the day. One of the youths made the comment that we eat better out there than we do in town. With the elder of the group leading the way the group continued on it's second day-leaving at 11:45 am. George Simba took the lead on the East-West line. Big machines are more ideal in deep snow conditions. There was use of the area early winter but snow was still deep 2-2 ½ ft on the old trail. Going was slower today. Getting stuck a lot and climbing hills and spinning out. Very mild weather and a brighter day made travel enjoyable despite slow travel. Scenery was incredible. This part of the Plateau is a burnt area. About 80% of the Plateau is burnt which makes any green(unborn) area more of a value at risk. No caribou tracks up here at 7:45 pm. The group arrived at Willow Lake cabins. The cabins were in good conditions. Clean, and lots of wood-ready for lighting a fire. 3 cabins were used-youths in one-others used 2 other cabins.

March 22, 2007

This was a planned day of rest and recoup. Equipment and fuel supply had to be checked and necessary repairs made to machines and sleds as well. Sat phone call to DFN

confirmed a visit by Grand Chief and Lee Thom at 10:30 am. In the early pm with the assistance by all we set a 100 ft net next to Eagle Island. Using an eight inch ice auger & chisel it took about 1 hour to set the net through 42 " of ice. The youths were very enthusiastic about visiting the net. The group then traveled over the lake to visit our neighbors, the Deh Gah Gotie. Halfway across the lake we met 6 skidoos. They were also heading over to visit us. Cliff Vandell and Youth Benjamin Vandell were in the lead. There was a traditional meeting of 2 tribes. That took place in the middle of Willow Lake-a lot of hand shaking. With the exception of Elder Jonas Antoine the west group continued on to the Deh Gah Gotie camp with those that turned back. West elder turned back with Cliff and Benjamin to visit our camp. They were impressed with the set up. LKFN should be proud of this property and make it more available for use. It is a good place for meetings and workshops. The evening was spent with some sitting by the fire and some inside telling stories.

March 23, 2007

Morning call to DFN reconfirmed the arrival of Grand Chief and Lee and the press (CBC). They arrived at 10:30am. There was a lot of picture taking and interviews by Julia Green of CBC. We put on an impressive show (sound for radio) of enthusiasm while pulling out of the net and taking fish out of the net. We were happy with the catch. 14 fish in total. After their departure it was time to get ready to travel via Deh Gah Gotie trail to Providence. Left camp at 1:45 pm. Halfway across the lake Elder Jonas broke down. Left machine behind and continued. Very brisk travel and a very well traveled trail - downhill all the way. It's a bright sunny day. Below the Plateau is very flat and a lot of old burn. It is very good moose country. Lots of tracks. Some looming dark clouds to the south east-looks like rain clouds. Arrived at a cabin on the north of Mills Lake in some heavy wet snow. The cabin came in handy to warm up and dry up. After an hour of waiting the snow let up enough for travel. Eventually the snow turned to rain for awhile. The bush trail turned on to Mills Lake for the last 30 miles. Made a brief stop at the Horn River Village to shake hands and exchange greetings with some locals. Arrived Providence 7:30 pm - 5 hours and 45 minutes from our departure from Willow Lake camp. A good supper at the Snowshoe Restaurant was appreciated. Kakisa group continued on and PKFN and LKFN groups were met for pick up. Everyone was on their way by 9 pm.

There was not enough time to do all the things that were planned. My recommendation is to have more time and disregard the 9 to 5 and Monday to Friday schedule. The traditional way of doing things and teaching is anytime, anywhere. The youths involved were far advanced in their knowledge and ones like these need only the opportunities to advance and carry on our traditions. I seriously recommend more opportunities more time, more interest, more youths, more teachers, and more commitment by the leaders.

Mahsi

Snowmobile tour educates youth


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Snowmobile tour educates youth

Roxanna Thompson
 Northern News Services
 Friday, March 30, 2007

FORT SIMPSON - Felix Isiah doesn't understand why people choose to vacation in the South instead of exploring their own land in the North.

"I don't understand why people pay thousands of dollars to go to Florida to Disney World when we have our own Disney World in our backyard," he said.

Isiah recently got a chance to explore part of the Deh Cho during a trip planned by the Dehcho First Nations.

On March 20, eight people left Fort Simpson on snowmobiles to emerge from the bush on March 23 in Fort Providence. Their route took them up the Mackenzie River for approximately 20-kilometres before going overland to Ediezech, also known as the Horn Plateau.

The trip was organized as a way to give young people the opportunity to look at unique areas in their territory, said Grand Chief Herb Norwegian.

"It was like a Deh Cho sovereignty tour," he said.

The trip brought together harvesters Jonas Antoine and Edward Cholo with Chief Lloyd Chicot from Kakisa, and five youth from Wrigley, Fort Simpson and Kakisa.

"It was a real eye-opener for those young people," said Norwegian.

Because this was the first time a trip of this nature has been organized it was a quick journey, said Norwegian. Future trips are expected to be longer. Being on the trip was a wonderful experience, said Isiah.

"It surpassed all my hopes," he said.

Isiah viewed the trip as a chance to reconnect with a part of his history.

"It was a rediscovery of a history lost," he said.

"For me every corner, every bump, every tree had a history. My ancestors travelled this land extensively."

The trip gave a brief taste of what life was like on the land, said Isiah. Isiah noted, however, that six hours on snowmobile would be the

Snowmobile tour educates youth

equivalent of around four days of travel using traditional methods.

The trip also built a kind of kinship between the participants.

"We knew that all we had was each other out there," he said.

Travelling overland on snowmobiles wasn't always easy. Each machine was pulling a sleigh full of supplies.

"It was hard going," said Isiah.

The hard work, however, was expected, he said. The travellers had to break trail for part of their journey. During the course of the trip two of the snowmobiles broke down and had to be picked up later.

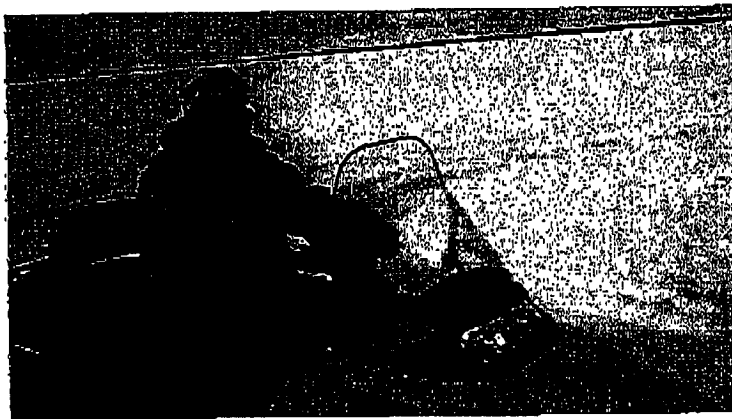
On the trip, the group spent their first night in a cabin on the north end of the Horn Plateau. The next two nights were spent in the Liidlii Kue First Nation cabins on the south end of the plateau before the final push to Fort Providence.

Eleven snowmobilers from Fort Providence joined the group at Willow Lake for the leg of the trip to their community.



Dehcho Youth Winter Tour 2007

On the trail to Willow Lake



Chief Lloyd Chicot of Kakisa Lake



ICE FISHING

