



Keewatinoow Converter Station & BiPole III
Aski Keskentamowin Report

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Cree Glossary

Places in Fox Lake Peoples Territory¹

Locale

Askiko Powistik	Kettle Rapids
Kischi Machidou Powistik	Long Spruce Rapids
Mahti Powistkosis	Little Limestone Rapids
Machidou Sipi	Limestone River
Askiko Sipi	Kettle River
Askiko Sakahikan	Kettle Lake
Askiko Sakahikanis	Little Kettle Lake
Makeso Sakahikan	Fox Lake
Makeso Sipi	Fox River
Kischi Sipi	The Great River (Nelson River)
Wabuttnow Sipi	Butnau Sipi
Niskimine Sakahikan	Sky Pilot Lake
Niskimine Sipisis	Sky Pilot Creek
Kyasko Sakahikan	Gull Lake
Kyasko Powistik	Gull Rapids
Moosokotao Sakahikan	Moose Nose Lake (Stephens Reservoir)
Picohawkan Sakahikan	Angling Lake
Picohawkan Sipi	Angling River
Opachiewanahk	Conawapa
Kishemichikani Sipi	Weir River
Kasosawaphikak Powistikosis	A particular spot on Kettle River because of the many flat rock on the rapids

Birds

Niska	Goose
Sisip	Duck
Sisipak	Ducks
Mikisew	Eagle

Fish

Anjawpeowak	Jack fish
Atihkwamekwak	White fish
Masamegos	Trout
Minayike	Mariah / Burbot

¹ Information derived from the Sturgeon Traditional Knowledge Report (2008), Keeyask Traditional Knowledge Report (2010), and preliminary Traditional Knowledge Study of the Keewatinoow Converter Station & BiPole III (2011)

Nameo
Namepinak

Sturgeon
Pickerel

Mammals

Atik
Askimao utikosisak/
Puskwaw utikuk
Mistkoskaw utikuk
Susaikgo
Namowin utikok
Askimao Utikosisak

Caribou
Barren land Caribou
Barren land Caribou
Woodland Caribou
Woodland Caribou
Penn Island Caribou
Qamanirjuaq Caribou

Moosa
Nikihk
Mahikan/Múhékan
Sikkosowak
Amisk
Amiskok
Wachask
Wacaskok
Wapos
Ochák
Wá pistán

Moose
Otter
Wolf
Weasel
Beaver
Beavers
Muskrat
Muskrats
Rabbit
Fisher
Marten

Plants

Anoskanuk
Niskeminah
Odahihminah
Osapominkh
Oskisihkominah
Ostikonihminah
Wekas
Wesahkeminah

Raspberries
Blueberries
Strawberries
Gooseberries
Logan berries
Cloud berries
Wild ginger
Cranberries

Values

Pimatisowin
Kihche Pimatisiswin

To live a good balanced life. Living the good life.
Spirituality - our beliefs and values and our
teachings

Wahkotowin

Relationships to our families and most important
how we are related to the land, as we are part of
creation.

Pahkwenamkewin

Sharing of what we have no matter how much we
have

Wechitowin

Helping each other whether in time of need or when in crisis

Other

Nipe

Water

Aski

The land, water, animals, plants, and people and their interconnections.

Inninuwak

People

Makeso Sakahukan Inninu

Fox Lake person

Makeso Sakahikan Inninuwak

Fox Lake people

Kitayatisuk

Are the people with heart, that is, older people who are viewed as having certain attributes like kindness, wisdom, etc.

Muskego Inninuwak

Swampy Cree people

Wechatowin

“Togetherness”

Wechawakana

His/her spouse/partner

Executive Summary

Beginning in the 1960's, Manitoba's three largest hydroelectric generating stations have been constructed in the Fox Lake people's territory destroying forever the Kischi Sipi's natural flow, flooding Aski, and littering the landscape with converter stations and transmission towers to transport power and wealth south.

The proposed Keewatinoow Converter Station and BiPole III Transmission project is therefore contentious for many Fox Lake people because it will compound the harmful effects on Aski, which is the land, water, animals, plants, and people and their interconnections. Compounding the fragmented landscape and ecosystems does not foster an environment where Fox Lake people can live *mino pimatisiwin*. The intergenerational time-honoured knowledge obtained through our relationships with Aski contributes to Fox Lake people's ability to live and sustain healthy and vibrant lives. Human Health is dependent upon the health of Aski including our perceptions of health of Aski, therefore it is our responsibility to care for and nurture Aski so that it can provide for the future generations. *Mino pimatisiwin* constitutes this balance of human relationships with the ability to interact with Aski through harvest, consumption and regeneration of foods from Aski².

This report identifies and expresses the concerns Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and harvesters, based on their experience, know to be true about the short and long-term consequences of converter station and transmission line projects. This includes:

- The potential loss of a vital territory that provides Fox Lake with a sense of self-control over their own fate, where Fox Lake identity is continually reinforced through connections to the past and relationship to the land as their source of emotional, spiritual and cultural well-being.

² Please see: Fox Lake Cree Nation Position on Manitoba Hydro's Proposal to Construct BiPole III and Keewatinoow Converter Station on Fox Lake Cree Homeland as a part of multi-phased Project beginning with the Kettle Generating Station and potentially ending with the Conawapa Generating Station. P. 3

- The continued diminishing of the Fox Lake peoples access to vital resources, such as caribou, moose, furbearing animals, migratory birds, and fish;
- Addressing the importance of Fox Lake Aski Keskentamowin (AK) Studies, exploring Aski recovery and the additional collaborative studies required to learn about the affects of hydroelectric development. These studies are based on interviews with key knowledge holders in the community, ground-truthing and discussions with the Core Kitayatisuk and Harvester Group (CKHG).

The Aski Keskentamowin (AK) study describes the importance of the completeness of the environment and the holistic way that the Kitayatisuk view land, water, animal and people interactions. The AK interviews and discussions with the CKHG document how the local ecosystem is severely altered and fragmented due to past construction activities (roads, access, burrow pits etc.), which has compromised its ecological integrity. Further, it is predicted with new construction the fragmentation of the local ecosystem will increase. Much of the disturbed and altered landscape in the local area is severely damaged, unsightly and in need of rehabilitation and recovery.

Key findings in the Fox Lake Aski Keskentamowin include:

Aquatic:

- Fishing is an important Fox Lake cultural activity. The construction of BiPole III and Keewatinoow Converter Station will increase the local population thus leading to an influx of transient workers extracting already strained resources such as brook trout and sturgeon.

Terrestrial:

- BiPole III and Keewatinoow Converter Station will continue to wreak havoc on the local landscape. Many Fox Lake people harvest plants, roots and berries where the proposed Keewatinoow Converter Station will be situated.

- Fox Lake led research, reaffirms that this area is vital to caribou, moose and other fur bearing animals, the surrounding habitat provides local animals a rich assortment of nourishing food.
- As well, the destruction of this area will hinder Fox Lake people's ability to acquire high quality Inninu food.
- Construction of BiPole III and Keewatinoow Converter Station including material extraction will disturb animals and it uncertain these animals will return to the vicinity upon completion of construction.
- Caribou and moose are a major source of food for Fox Lake there is considerable interest by the Fox Lake community about past and future populations.
- AK shows that there are up to three subspecies of caribou in the local area, one of which is woodland. The identification of woodland and other caribou is based on the people's long-term experience of harvesting caribou, namely each subspecies's behaviour and morphology (what this subspecies looks like).
- AK revealed that the local population of woodland caribou utilizes the forests and bogs of the area, and is made up of a migratory woodland ecotype³ and extension of this boreal woodland caribou range into the Fox Lake resource area would be well beyond the present accepted distribution reported by Environment Canada and Province of Manitoba report on caribou.
- AK revealed that some of the local woodland caribou are similar in appearance to Pen Island caribou. Woodland caribou continue to live in the local area and throughout the Fox Lake traditional resource use area, including the Angling and Hayes River areas.
- AK asserts that caribou populations have declined significantly as a result of Hydro development. Historically, woodland caribou were abundant year round in the local area and caribou meat constituted the primary source of red meat.

³ Please see: Environment Canada (2011) *Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou (Rangifer tarandus caribou), Boreal Population, in Canada [draft]: Species at Risk Act Recovery Strategy Series*. Environment Canada, Ottawa. P. 30

- Past development activities from construction, noise, outside hunting pressure, flooding of traditional migration routes and Generation Station operations which create unsafe ice conditions for caribou have contributed to its decline in the local area.
- The loss of local habitat in areas of dam construction and operation has resulted in a significant decline in caribou numbers and a gradual replacement of caribou by moose as the primary source of red meat.
- Critical rutting habitat was destroyed, and woodland caribou were extirpated from the Mile 346 area.
- The CKHG recognizes that weather patterns play an important role in caribou movements and may modify the migration path of caribou. Subsistence hunting can be drastically affected when adverse weather conditions are combined with generating station operations; the latter creates unsafe ice conditions and caribou mortality. This applies to all caribou subspecies and ecotypes.
- The CKHG considers, at present, there are sufficient numbers of caribou to support a Fox Lake subsistence harvest in Fox Lakes traditional resource use area, but these populations are threatened by outside hunting pressure, current and future disturbances associated with dam construction and human activities, and further fragmentation of the local environment.
- The CKHG expects a significant increase in the mortality of caribou as a result of increased hunting pressure (due to the doubling of the human population in Gillam and the increased accessibility of hunting grounds by additional cutlines, etc.).
- The CKHG expects a further decline of caribou due to developments in the local area that will result in more effort by the community (time and cost) to obtain this important food source.

Heritage:

- The construction of the Keewatinoow Converter Station and BiPole III will disturb Fox Lake peoples ancient ancestors final resting places.

Aski Keskentamowin

- Fox Lake Aski Keskentamowin teaches people the essential skills to live vibrant lives. This knowledge is intergenerational. Foundations of the Fox Lake community identity are within Aski. When a young person is taught to hunt, the knowledge holders transfer essential skills, and fundamental wisdoms are learned such as respect for animals, rhythm of the seasons and patience.

The CKHG estimates:

- Over 100,000 acres of their local resource use area (defined as the region between the Keeyask and Conawapa Rapids) has been lost as a result of past hydroelectric development.⁴
- 75% of the local resource areas used for berry picking and the harvesting of medicinal plants has been destroyed within 3 hour walking distance for Fox Lake people in both Gillam and Bird. A similar amount of trapping and hunting area has been lost. For example, the CKHG predicts an 80% reduction in the current local population of caribou as a result of new developments.
- Lake sturgeon and brook trout fishing sites within 3-4 hour walk of Gillam and Bird has been destroyed and populations are reduced to well below subsistence levels of the past. Indeed lake sturgeon and brook trout are extirpated from some areas in the local resource use area and reduced to remnant populations in other areas. The exception is Limestone River where there is a modest recovery of brook trout but the Fox Lake community predicts, based on past experiences, that numbers will decline catastrophically as construction workers enter the

⁴ Please see: Fox Lake Cree Nation (2007) *Fox Lake Cree Nation Grievance Statement*. Page 49.

area, unless restrictions are placed on their fishing activities in Fox Lake traditional resource use areas.

The CKHG considers Manitoba Hydro and their consultant's efforts to estimate caribou and fish populations and predict impacts are unsound for a variety of reasons, including:

- Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and harvesters were not involved in the design of the scientific studies for the BiPole III and Keewatinoow Converter Station Environmental Impact Statement.
- Fieldwork was inadequate in terms of duration and season.
- Studies did not properly document and adjust for disturbances created by on-going construction activities.
- Studies did not properly document and adjust for human interference (e.g., people deliberately removing fish from North/South nets).
- Baseline data generally does not include historical population levels.
- Studies disturb and in some instances cause mortality to individual animals (e.g., helicopters disturb caribou, moose and song birds have become entwined in string leftover from large mammal studies; also some tagged fish died).
- Confidential information about animal locations and movements has been disclosed to outside hunters thus resulting in instances of overhunting (and overfishing).
- Communications and collaboration between the people of Fox Lake and Manitoba Hydro consultants is inadequate and thus Elders and harvesters have had limited opportunities to provide proper input to the studies prior to initiation. For example input from the CKHG to determine what specific species to study. Many Kitayatisuk believe there are inadequate studies done on Burbot, which is an Inninu delicacy.

The CKHG has the following recommendations, which will begin to address major impacts (past and future):

- A comprehensive recovery strategy for the local landscape.
- Develop hunting protocols that apply to the local area and throughout Fox Lake's traditional resource use area. These protocols will prohibit hunting by outsiders and restrict access to hunting areas.
- Develop a big-game monitoring program led by Fox Lake and based on Elders and harvester's extensive knowledge of the topics.
- Employ Fox Lake people to work within their traditional use areas to avoid outsider abuse of harvest. Harvesters hired as on-site monitors for all fieldwork conducted within the local area and Fox Lake entire traditional resource use area.
- Manitoba Hydro consultants are invited by the CKHG to discuss the results of the moose and caribou studies. The CKHG also requests the presentation be made available in advance of the meeting.
- Outstanding payment (and information) is given to hunters who provided mammal tissue samples to Manitoba Hydro.
- All Manitoba Hydro consultants to adopt Fox Lake research protocols.
- All future sampling protocols in Fox Lakes traditional use area must be vetted by the CKHG prior to the start of a study.
- Manitoba Hydro consultants to present findings to Fox Lake CKHG.

Where we are situated

Fox Lake people's territory is situated in the northeast region of Manitoba, embraced by rivers, lakes, and muskeg. Fox Lake people's history is rooted in stories, landmarks, relationships among land, people and animals, and through the Inninu language. More specifically, their relationship to the land and waters is reflected in the telling of stories and legends about Aski; the naming and remembering of places and landmarks; the use and navigation of the local landscape and waterways; and the received knowledge they hold about the plants, animals, and seasonal cycles within the territory. The Kischipi, or "Great River" (Nelson River), is the largest water system to flow through the Fox Lake people's territory.

Four of Manitoba's largest hydroelectric generating stations are situated along the Kischipi, which is unlike any other indigenous community in Canada. The first of these, Kelsey, was built on the River in 1960. Following Kelsey were the Kettle (1971), Longspruce (1977), Jenpeg (1977) and Limestone (1990) Generating Stations. In order to transport electricity to southern Manitoba and elsewhere, two converter stations, Henday and Radisson, and two sets of transmission lines, BiPole I and II, were also constructed. Two additional generating stations Keeyask and Conawapa are currently proposed within a 50-kilometer radius of Gillam and Bird, and the proposed BiPole III and Keewatinooow Converter Station will add an additional physical footprint to the territory in the form of permanent and semi-permanent infrastructure. The latter two projects, although considered separate projects by Manitoba Hydro, are in fact interdependent, that is, both are necessary for transporting power from its source to its terminus, and thus this document will refer to them collectively as 'the project'. The various components of this project include:

1. Converter Station
2. Electrode site
3. Worker camp
4. Sewage "lagoon"

5. Series of transmission lines including BiPole III
6. Access roads
7. Deposit sites (burrow deposits and quarry stockpiles)
8. Excavation sites (rock quarries and wells)

BiPole III will be a high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission line. The proposed line would begin south of the present day Conawapa Camp (north of Bird) at the Keewatinoow Converter Station. The project includes the HVDC transmission line, energy conversion facilities, and system connections. The choice of route has been the subject of much public controversy, and it is currently planned along the west side of Lake Winnipeg. Regardless of its southern route, however, the Converter Station (and hence the source of BiPole III) must be constructed within the proximity of the Keeyask and Conawapa generating stations, and precisely within Fox Lake territory.

Hydroelectric development continues to be viewed by Fox Lake members as the primary cause of Aski's degradation. That is, the Utility is viewed as having caused irreparable damage to the land and waterways and as having significantly contributed to a variety of social pathologies including substance abuse and family and societal breakdown. Based on historical knowledge of Fox Lake the long-term environmental impacts anticipated by this project is the decline of populations of, for example, moose, caribou, migratory birds, and fur-bearers, and the extirpation of, for example, brook trout from waterways made accessible by the project. Similar conclusions are documented in the Keeyask Traditional Knowledge Study (2010) and about many of these same species. The human impacts of environmental degradation such as alienation from the land, water and other important resources have been shown to greatly affect people's emotional, psychological, and physical wellbeing.

Informed by past converter station and electric generation projects, Fox Lake expects that once construction on the KCS commences, the land and waters will become even more scarred by, among other things, excavated rock deposits, transmission lines

and access ways. Fox Lake people continue to experience the physical and biological transformation of their land and waters as a result of hydroelectric development.



Figure 1 – Photo of Henday Converter Station. This is what the Keewatinoow Converter Station is expected to look like upon completion. Photo Credit: Brian Kotak



Figure 2 – Keewatinoow Converter Station Site. Preliminary construction has begun at the potential site. This picture depicts the current (March 2011) work conducted by Manitoba Hydro. It also illustrates the impacts of hydro development has on the land. From once an intact forest, the land is now scarred forever. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross.

Theoretical Framework – Living Mino pimatisiwin

During initial discussions on possible impacts of BiPole III and the Keewatinoow Converter Station, Fox Lake Environment Researcher Leslie Agger posed a question to a group of Kitayatisuk and Harvesters, “What are the most important areas in the BiPole III and Keewatinoow Converter Station study area?” Jack Massan (2011) immediately reminded her that “Inninuwak valued everything equally,” and it was problematic to compartmentalize Aski since its interconnections were equally important as its constituent parts. From a Fox Lake Inninuwak perspective, being able to live a good life (*mino pimatisiwin*) is linked to the knowledge that Aski is intact and healthy.

This report documents Kitayatisuk and Harvester’s shared view that all aspects of nature are important and interconnected. This includes the people, animals, plants, land and water. When one element is altered or destroyed this affects all other elements in

the system. Similarly, the environmental and human impacts of one hydroelectric generation project are confounded and magnified each time a new project is built. Therefore, Fox Lake posits that all past and future hydroelectric projects constitute one staged process of development. Moreover, each project, whether it is a generating station, converter station, or transmission line, is viewed in terms of its total human and environmental impacts.

Many themes have emerged within the data collection phases of this Aski Kiskentamowin (knowledge of Aski) study including the importance of Inninu foods, the Inninu language, and the transmission of Inninu knowledge to the younger generations. Within these themes, Kitayatisuk especially have expressed the cardinal importance of living a good life in balance with Aski, which includes respectful relationships with human beings, which in the Inninu language is referred to as mino pimatisiwin. In a 2011 interview, Jessie Anderson described her understanding of mino pimatisiwin.

The way I understand mino pimatisiwin today is how I was taught to live my life. Back then I didn't understand what my parents were talking about when I was told to "mino pamatisi, Jessie." I was playing with my nephew who was younger than I was. I got a little rough with my nephew who I love dearly to this day. That is when my dad told me to "mino pimatisi." I asked him what that meant. He said, "don't get rough or mean with your nephew. Be kind to him because I can tell he loves you and I know you love him." I was taught to respect the land and animals, waters and people and always lend a helping hand especially to Kitayatisuk and to little children, no matter who they are, what they look like, you will never go wrong. Another teaching I didn't understand was depatenimowin (humility). Naturally I asked what it was, the answer was never put yourself before others, never think that you're better than anyone or you'll have a very rude awakening. Always be truthful, if you are caught lying and you lie again upon a lie that will get you into more trouble. Be honest and trustworthy or no one will believe you. Of course, I was taught the Ten Commandments, as well. It's not that I lived up to these teaching all the time. I

sometimes fell along the road of life. But as I got older and understood them I did begin to live up to these teachings... Mino means balance or good and pimatisiwin means life. By knowing these teachings one can live mino pimatisiwin (2011).

Jessie Anderson's recollection of particular 'life lessons' such as being kind to people and animals, demonstrating respect, and practicing humility is what one might define as the important traits of being a 'good' human being, which when practiced constitute good living for an individual and society. Mino pimatisiwin is being able to live life in balance and, as stated by Jessie, there are times when it is difficult to live up to the ideal of mino-pimatisiwin. Recognizing imbalance in one's own life and taking steps to rectify this also constitutes living mino-pimatisiwin. To demonstrate the meaning of good living Jessie provided the example of traveling up and down the Kettle River with her parents in the early-to-mid 1940s. The acts of hunting and fishing together provided opportunities for many life-lessons to be learned such as using as much of one's skill as possible and not wasting food (2005). The concept of mino-pimatisiwin is one that is shared among Inninuwak. Anthropologist, Naomi Adelson's (1998) research documented how mino-pimatisiwin is understood by the Eeyou Estchee⁵ of Whapmagoostui:

Someone is said to be *miyupimaatisiun* [mino-pamatisiwin] if he or she eats the right foods, keeps warm and performs the activities needed to accomplish one's goals, whatever they may be. There is a cyclical affinity between the Cree person, hunting, the land, and food that incorporates all aspects of Cree life and, necessarily, of wellbeing. Protection from the cold, physical activity and eating Inninu food are the principal factors described as necessary for 'being alive well.'

In the past, a family would travel alone or with other families when hunting, fishing or trapping. Their diet included a wide range of foods, including berries, roots, large game such as moose and caribou, rabbit, beaver, trout and sturgeon, waterfowl and other

⁵ Eeyou Estchee – What the Cree people of Whapmagoostui (northern Quebec) refer to themselves as. Fox Lake and Whapmagoostui are both Cree communities with different dialects.

small game. Fox Lake people continue to extensively hunt, fish, gather, and travel in the traditional territory, and most Fox Lake people rely on a variety of wild meats, fish, and plants as a regular part of their food intake. Aski provided the essentials to live *mino pimatisiwin*, unlike today.

How Fox Lake views hydroelectric development in its territory

Hydroelectric development in Fox Lake people's territory began in the early 1960's with the planning and construction of the Kettle Generating Station on what was then Askiko Powistic (Kettle Rapids).⁶ The arrival of Manitoba Hydro has often been described as an invasion, which served as a major impediment to living a good life. In a 2004 interview for *Ninan*⁷, Fox Lake member Sara Jean Peters stated: "Hydro just came in and grabbed everything. They didn't ask to dam the river." What many Fox Lake people view as the callous encroachment of the Utility into their territory has been characterized as a continuation of colonial and imperial practice. Lawyer Sharon Venne (Cree) reminds us, "The versions of history penned by the colonizer always and invariable defend the colonial order, either by denying that the processes of colonization has 'really' been colonizing, or, to the extent that the opposite is sometimes acknowledged, by carefully applying the spin necessary to make the whole thing appear to have been of benefit to all concerned... (2000, p. xiii). To Manitoba Hydro, the land and waters within Fox Lake territory constituted an abundance of 'resources' that could benefit the larger Manitoban population by providing them with relatively inexpensive electricity and at the same time produce incredible profits through the sale and export of electricity to the United States.

Fox Lake has undertaken a number of assessment processes in relation to past and future hydroelectric projects including a History Project, *Ninan*, and Aski Kiskentamowin (knowledge of Aski) studies from which a clear theme has emerged.

⁶ The former Askiko Powistic was one of a series of rapids on the lower Kischipi that, among other things, were important spawning areas for sturgeon. Prior to dam-building the Kischipi supported a large and viable sturgeon population in large part due to the numerous sets of rapids that were of the proper (shallow) depth and (high) flow for sturgeon spawning (Jessie Anderson, personal communication to Leslie Agger on September 8, 2011). Today, only a few of these habitats remain, for example, at Flathead Rapids.

⁷ *Ninan* – Fox Lake Cree Nation History Project Draft (2010)

Especially among Kitayatisuk, there is an overall sense of loss that is largely associated with hydroelectric development in the form of depriving people of space to practice important cultural traditions; loss of language; loss of pristine land and water; loss of the sound of the rapids; lost access to and quality of Inninu foods; lost physical, social and economic wellbeing; and so on. Many Fox Lake members view Manitoba Hydro's arrival in their territory during the early 1960's as the beginning of a period of drastic change that profoundly impacted the people's wellbeing. How does one compensate for such losses?

Fox Lake's research has correlated the systematic alteration and destruction of Aski by dam-building to a profound decline both in the perception and physicality of Fox Lake wellbeing. This is not a unique perspective, however, Anishinabe Scholar Leanne Simpson (2004) describes how development by industry has adversely impacted Indigenous peoples' knowledge, culture, and land and water base. She states:

In present times environmental destruction of Indigenous territories facilitated by state governments and instituted by large multinational corporations continues to remove Indigenous Peoples from the land and prevent Indigenous Peoples from living our knowledge. Indigenous Knowledge comes from the land through the relationships Indigenous Peoples develop and foster with the essential forces of nature. These relationships are encoded in the structure of Indigenous languages and in Indigenous political and spiritual systems. They are practiced in traditional forms of governance, and they are lived in the hearts and minds of Indigenous Peoples. Without intact ecosystems, Indigenous Peoples cannot nurture these relationships (378).

The alienation of the people from their land and water base as a result of dam-building has affected multiple generations of Fox Lake peoples. Community assessments document the significant gap between younger and older people in terms of, for example, types and levels of knowledge of Aski, language, social norms of behaviour, values, and perspectives on the environment. Many if not all of these changes are

viewed negatively especially by older people, who lament that younger people do not possess skills essential for survival and good living in the “bush”.

Innu scholar from Fisher River, Verna Kirkness’ (1999) reminds us:

The development of the whole person was emphasized through teachings often shared in storytelling... through which children learned traditional values such as humility, honesty, courage, kindness and respect... Traditional education was strongly linked to the survival of the family and the community. Learning was geared to knowledge necessary for daily living. Boys and girls were taught at an early age to observe and utilize, to cope with and respect their environment. Independence and self-reliance were valued concepts handed down to the young. Through observation and practice, children learned the art of hunting, trapping, fishing, farming, food gathering, child-rearing, building shelters. They learned whatever their particular environment offered through experiential learning (p.16).

Kirkness’ perspective of Indigenous education is inherent through in-depth and philosophical conversations, with Fox Lake Kitayatisuk. At a recent Core Kitayatisuk and Harvester meeting, participants voiced deep concerns about the vital importance of Aski and the type of Aski-based education not readily available to the young people at this time. The group offered many ideas on how Fox Lake could pursue these types of educational opportunities, and were quite excited to create a framework to assure that their Inninuwak Kiskentamowin (Cree Knowledge) remains an important issue, especially among the children and youth. Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters have emphasized that many of Fox Lake’s youth are disconnected from time-honoured Innu traditions, values, histories, and knowledge of Aski and that there is a great need to bridge this pedagogical, epistemological, and ontological gap. In order to start addressing these issues, there is a need to understand the reasons why we are at this place of apparent dissonance.

First, we need to understand Indigenous people’s history within a Fox Lake Inninuwak context. This requires a concerted effort to engage the young people with

the Kitayatisuk, Harvesters and other knowledge holders. An example of this includes creating spaces to have such discussions like inter community Elder and Youth gatherings. In March 2011, Fox Lake organized a Kitayatisuk and Youth gathering, and the objective was to unite the young people with Kitayatisuk. Fox Lake invited Kitayatisuk from York Landing to attend, this demonstrates a contemporary nation-to-nation relationship as well as a historical relationship that stems from their shared experiences at York Factory. The two-day event allowed the participants to learn from the Kitayatisuk and other knowledge holders and allow Fox Lake youth to connect with other young people from the different communities. The gathering was held mostly in Inninu with translators available to bridge the language gap. The participants at the gathering were required to utilize their listening skills in order to gain and absorb the vastly important knowledge being presented. First, Indigenous histories and identities must be recognized and given equal value (as well as places and spaces for their expression) as dominant Euro-Canadian ones. One of the negative consequences of colonialism is that Indigenous histories and identities have been systemically repressed to the point that Indigenous people themselves have often internalized narratives produced by Euro-Canadian colonizers about 'Indians'. A contemporary example is the reference to the Fox Lake Cree Nation as a "Keeyask Cree Nation" in the Keeyask Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Among other things, the latter re-naming of Fox Lake according to one of Manitoba Hydro's proposed dams effectively stifles how Fox Lake perceives of and expresses its own identity. Changing these patterns require a concerted effort to tell, interpret, and critique our own histories and identities through the engagement of and among all generations of Fox Lake people. The recent gathering between Fox Lake Cree Nation and York Factory First Nation brought together all generations of Inninuwak thus creating a space for intergenerational interactions. This gathering was also meant to reinforce and build upon kinship and nation-to-nation relationships. In the past, gatherings of a similar nature occurred at the Hudson Bay coast and later at York Factory. These gatherings were often held at the beginning of summer and during treaty celebrations.

Secondly, it needs to be acknowledged that the effects of colonialism continue to be experienced within Fox Lake and other Indigenous communities with profoundly negative consequences. They may not be as blatant as the Canadian state-controlled residential school system, yet still in 2011, Inninuwak continue to experience the negative aspects of colonialism through the exploitation of Aski. The land, water, plants and animals that are part and parcel of Aski are the constituent parts of mino pimatisiwin. When Aski continues to be irreparably altered and destroyed by dam-building the possibility of attaining mino pimatisiwin is greatly reduced. The damage to the land has caused human beings to be altered to the point where they can no longer interact with the land. Fox Lake Inninuwak always benefited economically from the land because they lived off the land and used various elements of the land in trade but that economic benefit has not been seen in these contemporary times.

Currently, Fox Lake is in the moral and ethical dilemma where, in order to benefit economically from additional hydroelectric developments, it must also accept and participate in the degradation of Aski albeit indirectly. Fox Lake is in the process of considering how this dilemma can be reconciled, for example, by implementing a long-term project to reclaim and restore the ecological and aesthetic integrity of land and waterways degraded by past dam-building. Fox Lake is also considering how it can exercise its inherent right of self-determination by, for example, reclaiming Inninu place names. Fox Lake people's traditional territory encompasses a vast area, including the area known by the Province of Manitoba as Atkinson Lake (Makeso Sahakikan, Fox Lake). Kitayatisuk like Robert Beardy (2009) continue to emphasize the importance of counter-mapping, that is, recording and re-instituting Inninu place names.



Figure 3 – Perturbed land off Conawapa Road. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross



Figure 4 – Picture of gravel pit also off the Conawapa road it depicts the rough and disturbed terrain caused by development. This is an example of what the Keewatinoow Converter Station footprint will resemble after construction. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross



Figure 5 – View looking towards the Kische Sipi from the proposed Keewatinoow Converter Station. The picture also shows the Conawapa Road, Limestone Generating Station, and additional cut lines. From once a pristine area, the land is scarred from hydroelectric development. Photo Credit: Brian Kotak



Figure 6 – Aerial view of Limestone Generating Station. Photo Credit: Brian Kotak

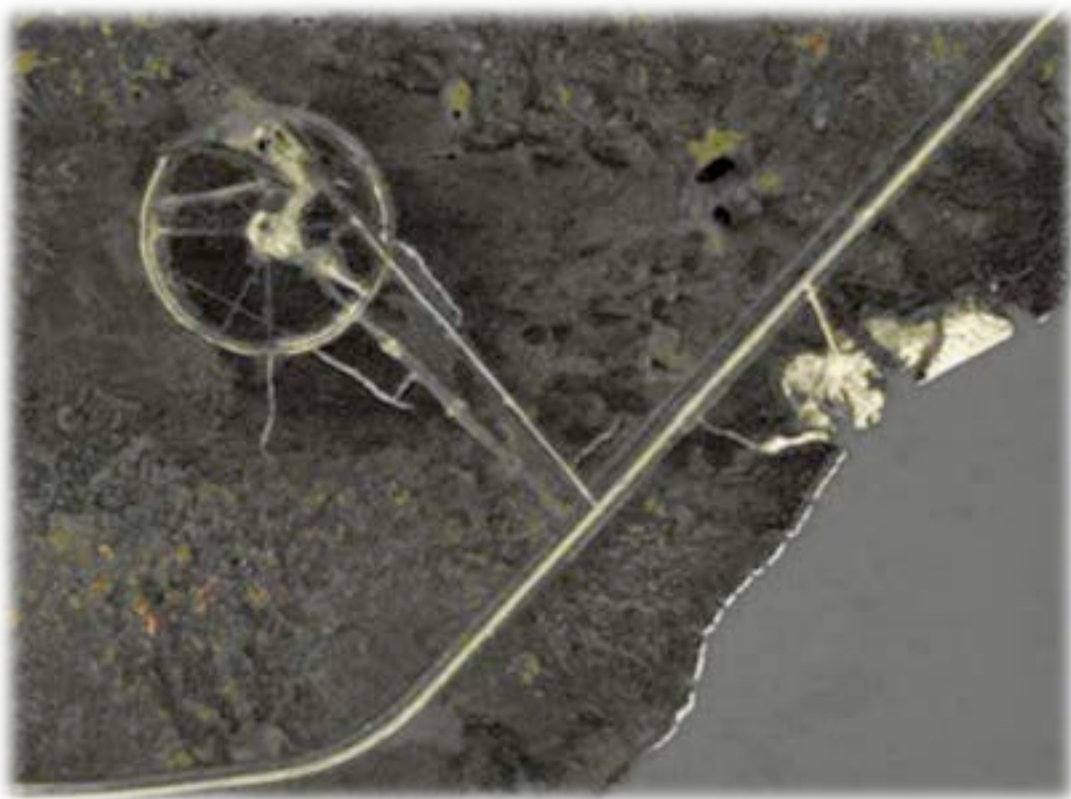


Figure 7 – Aerial view of the ground electrode at Henday. It is anticipated that the Keewatinoow Converter Station will resemble Henday. Photo Credit: Manitoba Hydro

Methodological Frameworks

The BiPole III & Keewatinoow Converter Station Traditional Knowledge Project used a number of research methods – map biography interviews, group interviews, and ground truthing – to document Fox Lake members’ expert knowledge and experiences about the land, water, and animals and plants. The combination of these methods greatly increases the importance and understanding of the overall research.

Data Collection Activities:

Map Biography Interviews		
Detail	Purpose	Work to date
Each knowledge holder is presented with an aerial-photo map of the BiPole III & Keewatinoow Converter Station (KCS) study area and asked specific questions about their current and past resource use. The selected map is covered with Mylar or plastic overlay, upon which each knowledge holder documents his/her land use information according to a colour-coded theme.	To document key land use and habitat information about the footprint area as well as the impacts of the BiPole III & KCS on an individual's land and water based activities.	Twenty-seven map biography interviews completed as of May 10, 2011

Table 1 – Map Biography Interview process

Community Mapping Sessions		
Detail	Purpose	Work to date
<p>Maps of various scales are covered with Mylar or plastic overlay upon which collective resource use areas are recorded according to colour-coded theme.</p> <p>A gathering of our Kitayatisuk and harvesters share collective land use information. These events allow people to tell stories and collaborate, brainstorm, and strategize about a variety of key issues.</p>	<p>To document key land use and habitat information about the footprint area, as well as the impacts of the BiPole III & KCS on the community's land and water based activities.</p>	<p>Five Completed as of December 20, 2010</p> <p>Caribou – October 2010 Moose – October 2010 Women's – December 2010 Overall Area – January 2011 Fish Spawning – June 2011</p>

Table 2 – Community Mapping Session process

AK data collected from Fox Lake members at Map Biography Interviews and Community Mapping Sessions were entered into a Geography Information System (GIS). The mylars containing the gathered AK were digitized into electronic format to allow for georectification, spatial accuracy and mapping purposes. Site-specific information (burial sites, camps, cabins, etc.) were entered as point data, linear routes traversing the landscape (trapping, fishing, hunting, etc.) were entered as lines and land encompassing large areas (hunting, berry picking, medicinal picking, etc.) were entered as polygons. All AK features collected had the Fox Lake member's name that provided the information, the date acquired, statistics such as count, length (Km) and area (Km²) and any other unique details about the spatial feature linked to it in table. AK data was then entered into a geo-database for storage, data sharing utilization and was used in a series of spatial analyses. One such analysis included Fox Lake data being overlaid with proposed Manitoba Hydro infrastructure development projects to precisely calculate the amount and types of traditional land uses to be impacted (Appendix 2).

General Observation & Community Participation	
Detail	Purpose
Community members, Kitayatisuk and resource users share additional information with TK Facilitators, which, in turn is shared with the lead researcher and other members of the environment team.	To keep dialog open between Aski Keskentamowin Staff and Fox Lake members Facilitators last day – July 2011

Table 3 – Observation and community participation rationale

Ground-Truthing / Fieldwork	
Detail	Purpose
Using previously collected data to verify locations of activity. Kitayatisuk and resource users guide the study team to key resource and ecological areas.	To document community land use activities, record “baseline” (i.e., pre-project) information, and monitor environment changes over time.
Work to date	
<p>October 2010 – External Advisor archaeologist Kevin Brownlee, Robert Beardy and Randy Naismith survey gravesites within the KCS footprint area.</p> <p>October 2010 - Wendy Ross, Jessie Anderson, Mary Beardy, and Robert Beardy ground truth the area alongside the Conawapa Road. Goose and other hunting areas are recorded.</p> <p>December 2010 – External Advisor Dr. Brian Kotak, Robert Beardy and Frank Beardy survey the proposed KCS footprint area.</p> <p>November 2010 – Traditional Knowledge Facilitator Jessie Anderson and community member Janice Anderson photo-document caribou migration routes.</p> <p>March 2011 – Researcher Wendy Ross, Robert Beardy, Frank Beardy and Randy Naismith Jr. document caribou migrations, traplines and other harvesting areas within the footprint areas.</p> <p>June 2011 – Researcher Wendy Ross, Frank Beardy, Robert Beardy, John Beardy, Ila Redhead, Jessie Anderson, Samson Beardy, David Beardy, Mary Beardy, Elizabeth Beardy, Janice Anderson, Stewart Anderson, Abraham Beardy, John Redhead and Randy Naismith photo-document areas perturbed by MH such as the Conawapa Road, Monkeys Pond, Sundance, Limestone Quarry, and Limestone Lagoon.</p>	

Table 4 – Ground-truthing and Inninu led fieldwork processes

Verification		
Detail	Comments	Work to date
To share our work with the interviewees and people who participated in fieldwork/ground-truthing. To ensure due-diligence to our local experts that we are being transparent in our research.	To be completed near the final stages of report writing.	Completed September 2011

Table 5: Verification and rationale

Keeping in mind the detrimental effects caused by four hydroelectric developments along the Kischi Sipi throughout the past fifty years, the research objectives were to:

- Document “baseline” (pre-project) environmental and land use information in relation to the footprint area including historical use of the area.
- Gain a better understanding of the human and environmental consequences of past (converter station) projects.
- Identify specific human and environmental impacts of the KCS and BiPole III project.
- Document Kitayatisuk’ and Harvesters’ experiences on the land for the purpose of informing younger and future generations of Fox Lake members.

In addition, this research will help communicate the importance of Aski to a larger audience, both within the Fox Lake community and Manitoba Hydro.

The work Fox Lake Cree Nation is undertaking to document its peoples’ historic and current land use, values and stories about the natural world, and perspectives on past and future hydroelectric development is for the benefit of both current and future generations. Our endeavors are ambitious. The methods used to document Inninu knowledge in a manner consistent with an Indigenous decolonizing research paradigm will allow Fox Lake to control the use of its Kitayatisuk and harvesters information, and will ensure that it will not be appropriated or reduced to ‘folklore’ or a ‘relic of the past’. Fox Lake people’s knowledge is alive and it must be protected like any individual would

protect their loved ones. This research postulates that Inninu livelihoods and knowledge are not relics of the past; Deborah McGregor (2009) reminds us that:

The word 'traditional' implies that knowledge is static and confined to information acquired in the past. In reality, this form of knowledge is continually evolving and expanding to incorporate new information as part of adapting and responding to current challenges (p.69).

It is important that Fox Lake has the opportunity to define for itself what Inninu knowledge is, as well as how it is represented and used by outsiders. All too often, only certain aspects of Inninu knowledge are deemed valuable and relevant and are made to "fit" outsiders' research agendas thus becoming subsumed into a western paradigm.

Participatory action research (PAR) is often described as a methodology that can empower change in a community. Deb Rutman, Carol Hubberstey, April Barlow and Erinn Brown (2005) state:

Participatory action research brings together several elements of research – inquiry, learning, critical analysis, community building, and social change. Participatory action research can be defined as "a way of asking questions about important issues in the life of a group or community (p.155)".

Within this methodology we have been able to ask vitally important questions, such as what mitigation efforts should be made to enhance or protect caribou migration routes? The use of this methodological framework in the Keeyask Traditional Knowledge Study allowed Kitayatisuk, knowledge holders and harvesters to be more fully engaged in identifying and addressing key issues related to the Keeyask Generation Project. It is our view that this methodology allowed the research team to take into account and document Fox Lake people's perspectives in a manner that facilitates positive change. PAR allows the interviewee to inform the research team on Aski issues, and then the researchers' document key information and present back to the community on what was heard during the mapping sessions. This is an active process in which Fox Lake is attempting to facilitate change within the current negotiating frameworks. For example, Fox Lake Core Kitayatisuk and harvesters are concerned with how Western scientists do

not collaborate with the community when conducting their studies. Often the scientists claim they have obtained 'Traditional Knowledge' through conversing with community members through time in the field, which is often obtained through an assigned guide. It is important to collaborate with Kitayatisuk and other harvesters on studies. This past summer an aquatic scientist from a consultation firm met with key individuals about sturgeon. They collaborated about where the receivers should be placed within the Keeyask Study area. This collaboration enriched the science and new information was recorded. Without direct input with Kitayatisuk and Harvesters this information would have not been recorded.

One of the key methodological findings in the Keeyask Traditional Knowledge Project demonstrated that ground-truthing is an essential component for verifying map biography data; it regenerates past and current knowledge, and is important in locating precise geographical locations. Critical for designing successful mitigation and monitoring, ground-truthing is required for all future research. Fox Lake will insist that key harvesters accompany Manitoba Hydro scientists while conducting studies in its territory, and to ensure that Inninu knowledge is properly referenced and not appropriated and misused. This process will allow for a reciprocal and informed exchange of knowledge between field technicians and Fox Lake resource users, which is sure to enrich the design of the study and confidence of the findings. Fostering a more respectful relationship is vitally important for any chance of mutual understanding. It takes commitment, understanding and patience.

The documentation of Fox Lake people's knowledge about the area that will be impacted by the proposed KCS and BiPole III while a tremendous opportunity also has some inherent challenges. One challenge is the fear that 'outsiders' will appropriate and exploit community knowledge when it is mapped or otherwise written down. For example at a medicinal plant workshop in the summer of 2010, many Kitayatisuk were afraid to share their knowledge with the research team. They were afraid that plant researchers may disrespect the medicines. Another challenge is that documentation will de-contextualize Inninu knowledge by removing it from the bush and moving it into the

office. Kitayatisuk emphasize the great need to be on to the land, which they assert is a key aspect of living mino pimatisiwin. As Fox Lake continues to rebuild and reclaim its rights as a nation, active engagement in Aski Kiskentamowin projects will become increasingly important in order to understand and deal with the impacts of hydro development.

Personnel

Position	Individual	Biography
Traditional Knowledge Facilitator	Mary Beardy	Origins from Shamattawa, lived in Churchill. RMB Chair
Cree Language Specialist	Jessie Anderson	Jessie lives in Bird with her partner Robert. Former Counsellor. Parents lived at Fox Lake.
Administrative Assistant	Shauna Saunders	Active volunteer in the Bird Community. Lives in Bird with partner.
Researcher	Wendy Ross	Wendy's ancestors are from the Pimicikamak and Kinosao Sipi area. Currently living in Winnipeg with her partner. Recently graduated from the University of Manitoba and obtained a M.A in Native Studies.

Table 6: Personnel

As dedicated workers at the front lines, the Aski Keskentamowin Facilitators are the “gatekeepers” of the research and interview materials. In addition to keeping regular contact with Kitayatisuk and harvesters to verify, communicate, and obtain additional information, they recruit participants, map locations based on biography interviews, and transcribe interviews. For this Aski Keskentamowin study additional money was budgeted to hire an administrative assistant to assist in transcribing, scheduling of interviews, cataloguing of maps, and regular office duties. The Inninu Language Specialist focused on the review and production of Cree documents and interview materials.



Figure 8 – Aski Keskentamowin planning meeting at the Fox Lake Environment office at Bird. On the table, John Beardy Sr. brought in what is commonly referred to as cedar vine to show the group the one of the medicine he utilizes (obtained in his back yard). These are a few of the many people who will be affected by hydro expansion. From Left to Right: John Beardy Sr., Janice Anderson, Stewart Anderson, Abraham Beardy, Robert Beardy, John Redhead, Ila Redhead, Elizabeth Beardy, Frank Beardy Sr., Samson Beardy and Wendy Ross. Photo Credit: Brian Kotak

Results

Medicine and Berry Picking

Gathering herbs and plants for medicinal use is a time-honoured activity for many Fox Lake people. As a result of past hydroelectric developments near and around Gillam and Bird, Fox Lake people are forced to travel further from their homes to harvest good quality plants and berries. Christine Massan (2010) described how good quality berries and medicines, that is, those that are free from dust and pollution, are typically found in areas that are less impacted by human activities, for example, away from roads or railway lines (personal communication, December 2, 2010). Christine Massan (2010) harvests berries along the Limestone River with her husband Jack, who has a trapline in the area. She often harvests raspberries, cloudbberries, strawberries, Saskatoon berries, blueberries and cranberries. According to Ms. Massan, “cranberries are good for all sorts of things such as bladder infections, sweet and sour meat, juice...” (personal communication, December 2, 2010). Christine and Jack often travel together and note the locations of medicinal plants for their future use. Marie Colomb (2011) travels by boat along the Limestone River specifically to harvest berries and other medicinal plants.

Noah Massan (2010) shared that many people pick tealeaves (e.g., Labrador Tea) near and around the Bird area, and that an important medicine known as Seneca root grows around creeks such as Swift Creek, immediately within the footprint of the proposed Keewatinoow Converter Station. Jack Massan (2010) also indicated that medicinal plants are abundant throughout the area, and stated: “you just have to know where to go” (personal communication, December 2, 2010). Fox Lake knows from past experience that the extirpation of certain plant species from hydro-affected areas generally represents a long-term biological impact with corresponding long-term social and human costs. An example is the distance harvesters need to travel further away from their homes to obtain vital plants and medicines that are away from current and future developments. Extensive time is required by harvesters to accustom themselves

with new places and terrains, adding to the plethora of obstacles to acquire vital food and medicinal sources.

Berry and Medicinal Plants

Type of Plant or Berry	Location	Information
Cedar – Vines	Limestone River	John Beardy Sr. brought in the plant during a ground truthing planning meeting in June 2011. It is used for respiratory ailments.
Pitchers Plant	Located in marshy areas. Recorded while ground-truthing the areas made more accessible by the Conawapa Road.	Plant that repels mosquitoes and other insects. “Used to help people who are ill feel better” Chest Infections Women’s ailments
Sage	Shorelines of Limestone River	* Core Kitayatisuk Meeting at Bird in August 2010 confirms sage in the area to be impacted by BIPOLE III/KCS. Ceremonial Use as insect replant
Sweet Grass	Shorelines of Limestone River	* Medicine workshop in August 2010 confirms sweet grass in the area to be impacted by BIPOLE III/KCS. Ceremonial Boiled for tea Christine Massan (2010) has smelled sweet grass at “the junction” between the Conawapa and Thompson

		Roads.
Labrador Tea	Recorded while ground truthing the areas made more accessible by the Conawapa Road. This is deemed problematic as it opens access to non-Fox Lake people. Shorelines of Limestone River.	Boiled for tea. Used to cleanse blood
Strawberries	Recorded while ground truthing the areas made more accessible by the Conawapa Road. This is deemed problematic as it opens access to non-Fox Lake people. Shorelines of Limestone River.	Rich in antioxidants and vitamin C
Saskatoon Berries	Recorded while ground truthing the areas made more accessible by the Conawapa Road. This is deemed problematic as it opens access to non-Fox Lake people. Shorelines of Limestone River and McMillan Creek.	Rich in antioxidants
Blueberries	Recorded while ground truthing the areas made more accessible by the Conawapa Road. This is deemed problematic as it opens access to non-Fox Lake people. Shorelines of Limestone River and McMillan Creek.	Rich in antioxidants
Raspberries	In the bush off Conawapa Recorded while ground truthing the areas made more accessible by the Conawapa Road. This is deemed problematic as it opens access to non-Fox Lake people. Shorelines of Limestone River and McMillan Creek.	Rich in antioxidants
Cloudberries	Limestone	Rich in antioxidants
Cranberries	Around Bird, Sundance, Shorelines of Limestone River, McMillan	Bladder infections

	Creek and Sundance Creek Conawapa Road. This is deemed problematic as it opens access to non-Fox Lake people.	
Gooseberries	Shorelines of Limestone River and McMillan Creek	Rich in antioxidants

Table 7: Medicinal Plant information as of May 16, 2011



Figure 9 – Aski Keskentamowin Facilitator Mary Beardy is holding kakeá pukwa which is a medicine to treat ailments such as colds, coughs and wounds. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross



Figure 10 - kakeá pukwa bush



Figure 11 – Askí Keskentamowin Facilitator Jessie Anderson holding poplar branch (late spring 2011). This medicine is used to assist in the healing of toothaches, sores and acne. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross



Figure 12 – Close up of poplar (June 2011). Photo Credit: Wendy Ross

Hunting

Caribou Hunting

Prior to dam building, Fox Lake harvesters report that the area was abundant with caribou especially during the fall, winter and spring migrations. Historically, caribou were abundant year round in the local area. According to Jack Massan (2011), “when you opened your door there was a caribou there [Mile 346]” Massan also recalled that prior to development, caribou were observed rutting in the open area located where the Bird radar station that was built in the 1950’s. As a result of this and other developments, critical rutting habitat was eradicated, and caribou were extirpated from the area now referred as Bird.

The late Dorothy Wavey (2004) recalled that during the 1940’s and 1950s while living in the Bird area, herds of migrating caribou passed directly by people’s homes, and as a result she and others avoided drying their laundry outside for fear their items would be trampled and lost. Similarly, Jack Massan (2010) informed the research team that year upon year caribou migrated through the Bird area coinciding with the rutting

season (personal communication, December 2010). As a result of disturbances brought about by the construction of dams, the frequency with which caribou migrate through Bird has drastically declined over the past fifty years (FLCN Core Group 2011). The once viable population of migratory woodland ecotype (and all caribou types) within the local area has also decreased as a direct consequence of years of hydroelectric development (Anderson, 2011). Jessie Anderson (2011) recalled that in the past, caribou constituted a primary food source. In fact, they were so plentiful that moose meat was considered a “treat” because Inninuwak only hunted moose on occasion. Past development activities from construction, noise, outside hunting pressure, flooding of traditional migration routes and generating station operations, create unsafe ice conditions for caribou have contributed to its decline in the local area (between Keeyask Powistik and Conawapa Rapids). As caribou declined over time, moose replaced caribou as a primary source of red meat. Based on past experience, Fox Lake Harvesters are very concerned that hunting pressure on both caribou and moose will dramatically increase especially once construction on the project begins.

Caribou Herd Information

Cree Herd Name	Description	English Name
Mistikoskaw utik	Caribou of a wooded area Have wooly hoofs	Woodland
Puskwaw utikosisak Askimao utikoisak	Small caribou of a barren land or Small caribou of an Inuit Land	Barren Land
Namowin atikok Wapanohk atik	Caribou from the northeast Brown fur near throat	Pen Island

Table 8 Information derived from Women’s Mapping Session held on December 1, 2010, Johnny Beardy (2009 and 2010) from Keeyask Traditional Knowledge Report (p.49)

The identification of migratory woodland and other caribou is based on Fox Lake people’s long-term history of harvesting caribou, namely each sub-species’ behaviour and morphology (what this subspecies looks like). The local populations of caribou utilize the forests and bogs of the area, and may be made up of a migratory woodland

ecotype⁸ and what is defined as a more southerly and westerly ranging boreal (woodland) caribou. Aski Kescentamowin revealed that some of the local caribou are similar in appearance to Pen Island caribou. Migratory woodland caribou continue to live in the local area¹ and throughout the Fox Lake traditional resource use area, including the Angling and Hayes River areas.

The Winnipeg Free Press in 1981 interviewed Aggie Hatley who lived in Ilford, about her life living in on the land. In her interview, she shared a story of when she was trapped on Whitefish Lake (100 km south east of Gillam). On January 20, 1945, Aggie was hunting with her father, as she was walking on the lake with her kill, she then noticed a section of the shoreline starting to quiver. Slowly she heard the growing thunder of hoofs and could see a large herd of caribou rushing towards her. She stated that there was no escape route and all she could do was crouch as low as possible with her kill. “The herd thundered around me for 1 ½ hours, I remembered that time because I looked at my watch... I thought it would be all over for me at any second, but those graceful animals never touched me or even a hair on the dead caribou. It was beautiful to watch them... [the snow] was packed as hard as pavement from the pounding of the hoofs (pg. 2, 1981).” Attley’s recollection of caribou supports the Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and harvester narratives about an abundance of caribou in the region.

The proposed Keewatinooow Converter Station and BiPole III will be situated directly within a well-known migration route for Pen Island and barren ground caribou and a habitat for migratory woodland caribou (Johnny Beady, Robert Beady, Randy Naismith Jr., Jim Lockhart (2010) and Marie Colomb 2011). Pen Island caribou migrate from the northeast, within the vicinity of Fort Severn, and then travel south towards Shamattawa First Nation. Fox Lake hunters often receive information from their relatives and friends at Shamattawa about the status of the migrating herd. From Shamattawa, caribou are known to travel through the Angling Lake and Angling River area and cross the Kischipi at lower Limestone and Flathead Rapids. Pen Island caribou also follow the Limestone River and sometimes mix with the barren ground

⁸ Please see: Environment Canada (2011) *Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou (Rangifer tarandus caribou), Boreal Population, in Canada [draft]: Species at Risk Act Recovery Strategy Series*. Environment Canada, Ottawa. P. 30

variety whose northern range includes Churchill, Manitoba. In October 2010, Robert Beardy informed us that these caribou were spotted traveling north towards the Conawapa and the Keewatinoow study area. He stated: "Pen Island caribou here swim all over the place. They swim to any island and then they come north and they turn back. They start from Angling Lake and come all the way this way to Goose Creek they cross here [near Conawapa]" (personal communication, November 2010). Beardy (ibid) also informed the research team that caribou migrate along the 'Old CN bed' near the Conawapa Road. Recently, he witnessed two packs of wolves (one with nine wolves) following the herd (personal communication, November 2010). Upon their arrival at the Kischi Sipi, they circled around southeast portion of the river until frozen over (personal communication, October 2010). John Beardy (2011) reported that they travel within a 25-mile radius until they cross. Jim Lockhart (2011) indicates that he has even shot Pen Island caribou by Fox River (personal communication). During the fall migration barren ground caribou congregate near the present Conawapa camp and Bird until freeze-up when they cross the Kischi Sipi and continue their journey in a southwesterly direction towards Ilford and Oxford House (Massan, May 2011). Frank Beardy (2010) informed the research team that barren ground caribou travel as far north as Charlebois. Robert Beardy, Howard Beardy, Abraham Beardy, Jim Lockhart, and Marie Colomb (2010) confirm that caribou cross the Kischi Sipi at Horseshoe Bay the site for the proposed Conawapa Generating Station and near, what is now a boat launch associated with Manitoba Hydro's Conawapa Camp. Jim Lockhart (2011) informed the research team that he has seen Pen Island herd cross at Jackfish Island, north of Conawapa camp on the Kischi Sipi (personal communication). Recently, caribou movements have shifted, especially after the construction of the Conawapa road. Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters assert that movements of migrating caribou are influenced by weather, wind, noise and activity, especially during dam-building and other construction.

The barren ground herd migrates from the northwest near the Lac Brochet area. Hunters indicate that both herds mix together in the late fall and early winter. According to Noah Massan (2010), caribou also migrate through Owl and Weir Rivers (personal

communication, November 30, 2010). Jack Massan (2010) informed the research team of atypical migratory woodland caribou behavior like remaining year round near his cabin (located near the Limestone River) as well near the Conawapa Rapids (personal communication, December 2010).

Caribou calve from late May to the second week of June. Their calving areas also include the Kischi Sipi tributaries as Swift Creek, Beaver Creek, Goose Creek and Moondance Creek as well as Spider and Deer Islands on the Kischi Sipi. These areas all have an abundance of vegetation that serves as food and shelter for caribou.

Fox Lake members hunt all three varieties of caribou mostly in the late fall and winter. Jim Lockhart (2010) informed the research team that in 2009 and 2010 he hunted caribou directly within the area upon which the Keewatinoow Converter Station will be built (personal communication, October 2010). Within the period of living memory, the area around what is now the Provincial Highway 280 is has not been a major hunting area for caribou, although the community uses this area for other reasons, e.g., fishing and travel. However, the Core Kitayatisuk and Harvesters Group predict that it could become an important habitat for caribou when construction activities begin, and caribou migration routes shift as a result.

In our discussions about caribou, Frank Beardy (2010) explained the differences between the three varieties of caribou that inhabit and migrate through the area. Among other things, herds can be differentiated through their overall size, colour, and hoof shape and size. For example, migratory woodland caribou are larger in size than barren ground caribou and tend to be grey in color. Barren ground caribou have hooves that are round while those of the migratory woodland ecotype are oval and pointed. Migratory woodland caribou also have larger antlers. Frank Beardy (2010) stated that the meat from barren ground caribou is also sweeter in taste than that of migratory woodland caribou (personal communication). Migratory woodland are usually observed as singular animals but groups of ten or more are occasionally seen. Wolves must hunt in packs in order to successfully kill woodland caribou. Migratory woodland caribou have a defined home territory and they have a circular pattern of movement. Jim

Lockhart (2011) knows that migratory woodland caribou live around Bird in the fall and wait for freeze-up to migrate (personal communication).

Many of our Kitayatisuk and harvesters assert that Manitoba Hydro and their consultants dismiss their knowledge and expertise especially about the existence of the migratory woodland ecotype in the local environment. Robert Beardy, Frank Beardy and Jack Massan (2010), have all stated that these technicians refuse to refer to these animals as migratory woodland caribou despite Inninu knowledge asserting the contrary. Rather, Manitoba Hydro refers to the migratory woodland ecotype as the “summer resident” variety.

The generation of hydroelectricity continues to result in what Fox Lake views as significant numbers of caribou deaths by drowning. During the winter when MH regulates the flow of water through the dams, water is often held back causing water levels upstream from generating stations to drop up to a meter thus creating unstable ice conditions for both humans and animals. Members of the Core Kitayatisuk and Harvesters group (2011) have witnessed caribou falling through the ice and drowning when unstable ice conditions are created. This impact is well known in the community and is documented in Fox Lake’s various traditional knowledge reports but to date has not been acknowledged in any of the published reports by Manitoba Hydro.

Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and harvester group recognizes that weather patterns play an important role in caribou movements, for example deep snow in a particular year can limit the migration path of caribou. However, when adverse weather conditions are combined with generating station operations, which creates unsafe ice conditions for caribou crossing and increased caribou mortality, subsistence hunting can be drastically affected. This applies to all caribou subspecies and ecotypes.

Photos of Caribou Migration



Figure 13 – Caribou Migration near Bird, MB. Photo credit – Jessie Anderson



Figure 14 - Caribou in the bush near Bird. Photo credit – Jessie Anderson



Figure 15 - Caribou tracks near Bird, MB. Photo Credit: Jessie Anderson

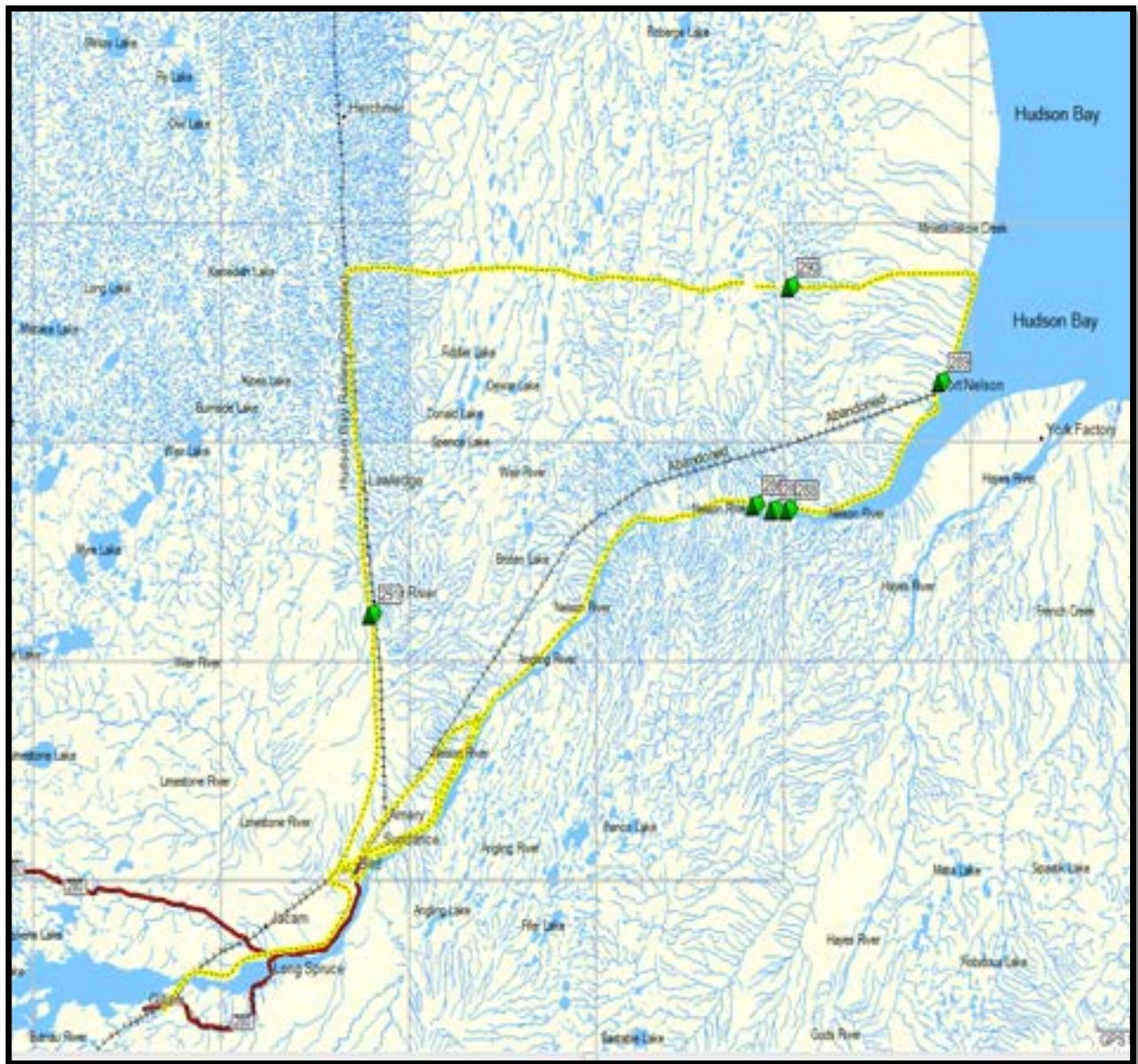




Figure 17 – Caribou migration route. Picture taken at Conawapa Road south of Goose Creek. This is also an important area for moose and other small animals. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross



Figure 18 - Caribou observed along the north bank of the Kisch Sipí at waypoint 286 (see figure 4), east of Deer Island on the Kisch Sipí. Photo Credit: Dr. Brian Kotak



Figure 19 – Caribou in bush right side of the Conawapa Road June 7, 2011. Photo Credit: Brian Kotak

Moose Hunting

Fox Lake harvesters hunt moose throughout the year. Autumn's rutting season offers harvesters an opportune time to hunt. Fox Lake harvesters observe the shorelines for any indications of moose sightings. The Keeyask Traditional Knowledge study documented that moose are territorial, and often visit the same area year after year. Hunters typically begin their hunt by calling moose, which, result in the appearance of a bull moose if lucky. Hunters often prefer hunting at either dawn or dusk and along shorelines because this is when moose are most likely to retreat from the woods and into the open to browse and drink.

The annual fall (September – freeze up) moose hunt is a community wide event. Families anticipate fresh moose meat, which supplements their diets throughout the year and a successful hunt equates to a freezer stocked with high quality Inninu food to last the year. The sharing of moose and other wild meats between families and friends is a tradition that is an important aspect of Inninu identity and practice. The Fox Lake group mapping session held in October 2010 indicated that there are many hunters who travel up the Limestone River to hunt moose. Marie Colomb (2011), Robert Beardy (2010) Abraham Beardy (2010), Jack Massan (2010) stated that they and others hunt

near McMillan Creek (off Limestone River). They also indicated that they hunt moose at Goose Creek (personal communication, October 2010). When interviewed in 2010, Jimmy Lockhart reported that he recently hunted, gutted, and prepared moose near the boat launch at Conawapa camp (a few kilometers away from the proposed converter station). He then distributed moose meat to his immediate family and extended relatives (personal communication, January 2011). Other hunting areas include: Sky Pilot Creek, Angling River, Angling Lake, Conawapa Rapids, Jackfish Island, and Spider Island. Moose are also known to feed at Beaver Creek, Tiny Creek, Goose Creek and at Creeks 15 and 16.

In March of 2011, Robert Beardy, Frank Beardy, Randy Naismith Jr., and Wendy Ross ground-truthed the Converter Station and BiPole III footprint area – also the trapline area of Frank Beardy - by ski-doo. During this fieldwork, fresh moose tracks were observed directly in the footprint area and Robert Beardy (2011) stressed that this was an important habitat for moose. Ground-truthing led us to Frank Beardy's cabin; where he (2011) highlighted the frequency of both moose and caribou in the proximity of his cabin. His cabin overlooks Spider Island, where seventeen moose were recently observed feeding on red willows, a favored food of moose, within a one-day period. Moose populations have modestly increased in some areas, however, this is tempered by more and more hunting by Provincial permit holders and non-Fox Lake members. Fox Lake Harvesters are concerned that this hunting pressure will only increase during the constructions. In addition to increased hunting pressure, habitats important for sustaining a viable moose population will be lost as a result of the building of the Conawapa Generating Station. This includes "Flathead Rapids" and Spider Island, both of which will be inundated by the dam's reservoir. The extent of Conawapa's flooding was confirmed in a 2009 Niskapetow fieldtrip jointly undertaken by Fox Lake and Manitoba Hydro.



Figure 20 – View from Frank Beardy’s cabin on the Kischi Sipi. Across the river is what is known as Spider Island. Manitoba Hydro employees have ‘dubbed’ this as ‘golf course island’. This is an important moose calving area.
Photo Credit: Wendy Ross



Figure 21 – Moose track near Limestone Quarry. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross

This past summer (2011), at a Core Elder and Harvester meeting, Zach Mayham reminded the research team about the importance of treating Aski properly including animals, *ananakachihat*, especially while hunting. In a 2004 interview, Mr. Mayham recounted a story in which he and his hunting partner failed to practice *ananakachihat*, and the consequences that ensued as a result, *oochinehwin*:

A person should not get a moose mad. I'll tell you a story about that. We went up the river where the rapids were fast and quick. He [hunting partner] heard a moose and grabbed his gun. There was a moose standing up and [he] jumped up. There were also two young moose there, but I couldn't help him because I was steering the motor and the rapids were running too fast. He shot at it. At first he missed but then he hit it. The moose took off running. We didn't bother the young moose and instead I turned the boat that way [in pursuit of the injured moose]. But we didn't see the moose. He got out of the boat and snuck up on him [moose] because the wind blowing that way [downwind from the animal]. "He'll be sick, that moose", I told him, "he'll die there". When he shot him again, he hit him. I was still steering the boat. He also shot the two [young] moose that were standing there. He asked me what we should do about that first moose that was shot. "Oh leave it", I said, "the wolves will eat it", because it had gone too far in the bush. That wasn't what we were supposed to do. We were told many times not to play with animals. We played with it and they told us we had to treat meat with the proper respect. "When you throw something away", an Old Man told me, "you will lose your chance to hunt." I was not able to kill anything else. I didn't kill another moose for five years because I got him angry. When I hunted, they always got away from me, and from [my friend] too⁹. In Ninan (2009), Leslie Agger synthesizes Zach's experience from what Kitayatisuk describe as experiencing *oochinehwin*. *Oochinehwin* is the implications of acting

⁹ Zack Mayham at the Core Kitayatisuk and Harvesters group meeting retold this story in August 2011. This experience was adapted from the Ninan project interviews (2004).

inappropriately, for example, if proper human-non-human relationships are not maintained. Agger (2010) states:

The young hunters quickly learned that the rules of society must be followed at all times, and that they were responsible for their own actions, even when circumstances made it difficult to do so. It should be noted that phrases such as, “to play” or “get a moose mad,” refer to the importance of keeping a respectful relationship with animals, the prohibition against cruelty to animals, and the belief that any unusable part of the animal should be disposed of in a respectful manner. These values are part of the larger concept of maintaining properly respectful relationships generally, and are key to traditional Inninu values (p. 19). Hunting is not merely an act of killing an animal; it is a reflection of the reciprocal relationship between animal and humans, an animal will give itself to the hunter, if the animal chooses so.

Waterfowl – Geese and Duck hunting

In mid-spring, while the territory is still blanketed with ice and snow, geese begin to arrive in the territory. The annual goose hunt is a sophisticated process that begins with the selection of preferred hunting locations and the construction of ‘blinds’ built with the purpose of concealing hunters. Fox Lake people erect blinds in areas where geese are known to land, for example, near the ponds and marshy areas in the vicinity of the Conawapa Road. During ground-truthing, Kitayatisuk and resource harvesters along with the Fox Lake research assistant, Wendy Ross visited a few of the key areas where members hunt geese. Many of these locations are accessible by foot or all terrain vehicles. One such location is known as Monkey’s Pond. Robert Beardy, Frank Beardy and John Beardy (2011) explained that because Monkey’s Pond lies within a goose migration path, it also serves as a nesting place for geese, ducks and other birds. It too is situated directly in the footprint of BiPole III, and will likely no longer be available as habitat. Hunters express great concern about this potential loss of habitat, and view its protection as a high priority issue.

A current goose hunting location is the Limestone Quarry. Every spring, Fox Lake hosts an annual goose hunt which is a three to five day community gathering held at this location. Although both adults and children participate in this event, children especially revel in the anticipation and experience of being out on the land with Kitayatisuk and senior hunters. The Core Kitayatisuk and Harvesters Group (2011), has stressed the importance of this event and even non-Fox Lake students take an interest these didactic events. The Core Kitayatisuk and Harvester Group stressed the need to also educate non-Fox Lake people about the history of Fox Lake people the history of dam-building and its implications. Marie Colomb (2011) stated: "I work at Gillam School in the Cree language program, and often many non-Fox Lake children will ask me how the land was before hydro development. I go home to consult with Johnny [partner] as he has seen the land change and then the next day I will share the stories and events to them (personal communication)."

The commencement of goose camp typically begins with the erection of canvas tents at the Limestone Quarry, often located as close to the blinds as possible to allow for early morning hunting activities. It is a usually older person such as parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, or cousins who identify and accompany youths to preferred hunting locations. Blinds are then set up and decoys positioned in marshy areas along the shoreline. The hunt commences with the calling of the geese. Although many people participate in this aspect of the hunt, significant time is also devoted to the preparation and cooking of geese. McGill University Anthropologist, Colin Scott, whose academic work derives from engagement with the Cree of Wemindji, Quebec hunters and Kitayatisuk, describes a similar set-up. Scott states:

Hunters arrange landscapes that will be attractive and non-threatening to geese, while exercising caution so that geese will not learn to associate unusual details with the possible presence of hunters. Decoys and goose calls are iconic approximations by hunters of the landscape of geese... Canada goose decoys must be realistic in profile and must be kept pointing to the wind, properly spaced, with decoys in both feeding and alert positions.

Geese are viewed as having “human” like qualities, for instance to mate for life, to be highly protective of their ‘mates’ and goslings, and to nest in the same areas year after year (Robert Beardy 2011).

Nora Wavey (2011) remembered that in the past, the people smoked their goose meat. She stated, people would debone the goose and place the meat onto racks. Nora remembers in the past, that there would be nightly feasts of goose soup and other people often prepared additional foods like moose and caribou. Women would also smoke fish along with the goose meat. Smoking meat was a favorable task as there were no freezers back then. People would dig holes and place their food into the ground, as the ground temperature was colder (personal communication).

Today Goose camp features nightly feasts of goose soup and other Inninu foods such as caribou casseroles and moose stews, and prepared in traditional and New World styles. One cook prepared an Asian-inspired caribou stir-fry with a multitude of vegetables and parboiled rice. This hybrid approach illustrated how Inninu foods are constantly being prepared using new styles and ingredients.

Noah Massan, Frank Beardy, Robert Beardy, and John Beardy (2010) assert that when Manitoba Hydro constructs the Keewatinoow Converter Station (KCS), goose habitat will be lost and people forced to travel further to hunt (personal communication, November 30, 2010). The continued encroachment of hydro development on Fox Lake’s territory will further impact the availability of wild foods like geese.

Photos of Geese Hunting Spots



Figure 22 – Goose Hunting Pond adjacent to Conawapa Rd. Also, this is an important area for moose and caribou hunting. Photo Credit: Dr. Brian Kotak



Figure 23 – Pond adjacent to Conawapa Road. Fox Lake Harvesters indicate that this pond is an excellent place to goose hunt. Also, this is an important area for moose and caribou hunting. Photo Credit: Dr. Brian Kotak



Figure 24 – Monkey's Pond. Fox Lake Harvesters favored hunting located. Future transmission lines will impact this area. They are afraid that the Geese and other waterfowl will not nest in this area. Robert Beardy (2011) has taken Fox Lake youth there to hunt geese. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross

Fishing

Fishing continues to be highly important as a cultural activity for many Fox Lake members. Many harvesters take their family members including children and grandchildren out onto the rivers, and knowledge is exchanged through hands-on learning and guidance. For example, Janice and Stewart Anderson have learned their skills from their parents, Jessie Anderson and Robert Beardy. When conversing with Janice Anderson, (2011) she explained that she enjoys learning about the land and teaches her children what she has learned. Janice fondly refers to the Limestone River as peaceful, and as a place where she and her family frequently fish (personal communication, January 2011). According to Stanley Beardy (2011), brook trout were abundant in Bird Creek. Nancy Beardy (2011) also remembers fishing trout at the “Old CN Bridge” near Bird (personal communication). Robert Beardy, Marie Colomb, Jack Massan indicated that Brook Trout spawn in the little creeks off the Kischi Sipi, such as Goose, Swift and Tiny Cree (personal communication, October 2010).

According to Stanley Beardy, beaver dams have decreased the flow of Bird Creek causing it to stagnate, and as a consequence it is more difficult for trout to travel upstream. Stanley also indicated that trout spawned at the “Old Cowboy’s Bridge”. He stated: “there were always trout in that pool of water. I remember the late Jim Lockhart Sr. used to live there, and there is a spot just a bit downstream. There is a little pond and there are a lot trout. It’s like a fishing hole,” (personal communication, January 2011).

Robert Beardy (2011) reports that he uses jackfish procured from the Kischi Sipi as bait in his traps because he perceives the quality as being poor, having originated from a hydro-affected area. Fishers view the quality and condition of the water in the Kischi Sipi as directly related to the quality of fish and fishing experience. Frank Bready (2007) states: It is hard to fish now because the water is low. It is so different now. The Kischi Sipi is not good for fishing. The polluted water is seeping into the creeks (personal communication). Many Kitayatisuk and harvesters have described the taste of fish now

as ‘bitter’ and the texture as ‘soggy’ and have indicated that they prefer not to consume fish from the Kischi Sipi as a result (personal communication).

Another concern raised by Noah Massan (2011) is the influx of workers into the territory. In the past, construction workers were known to sell the fish they procured in Fox Lake’s territory to buyers in the south. He remembers one worker describing the large profits he made after selling brook trout from the Kettle River (personal communication).

Robert Beardy (2011) asserts from previous constructions in Fox Lake peoples territory, the Keewatinoow Converter Station and its immediate footprint will not only affect plants and animals, but will also affect the fish in the creeks, as they are known to spawn up the small creeks. Many Fox Lake people extensively use the Limestone River. The river flows alongside the community of Bird and provides people with abundance of high-quality Inninu foods such as: brook trout, pickerel, burbot, suckers and jackfish. Kitayatisuk and harvesters also reported that they have caught sturgeon at the mouth of the Limestone and Kischi Sipi. There are also stories of people harvesting sturgeon further upstream on the Limestone River.

Fishing Table

Type of fish	Known locations where people procure fish
Brook Trout	Limestone River, creeks off Kischi Sipi including: Goose, Swift, Tiny, CN, Moondance and Sundance Creek
Sturgeon	Limestone Quarry, Kischi Sipi, Limestone River,
Pickerel	Limestone River, creeks off Kischi Sipi
Suckers	Limestone River
Whitefish	Limestone River
Jackfish	Limestone River, Bird Creek
Burbot	Kischi Sipi, Limestone River

Table 9 - Information is derived from Jack Massan (2010), Jim Lockhart (2011), Robert Beardy (2010), Stanley Beardy (2011), Randy Naismith Jr. (2011), Jim Lockhart (2011), Marie Colomb (2011), Nora Wavey (2011)

Trapping

Small Animals

Fox Lake people enjoy eating smaller game such as beaver, muskrat, and rabbit. Marie Colomb (2011) and her partner John Beardy often travel down the Conawapa Road to Goose and Tiny Creeks to snare rabbits, hunt spruce grouse (“chickens”) and trap beaver (personal communication, February 2011). The male children of Janice and Stewart Anderson (2011) prefer snaring rabbits near and around their home in Bird, and check often check their snares in the morning on their way to school. Sometimes Janice accompanies her husband, Stewart Anderson on the Limestone River when hunting beaver (personal communication, February 2011). Robert Beardy (2010) is worried that the beaver will drown in the little creeks off the Kischi Sipi if the proposed Conawapa Generating Station is built (personal communication, November 2010). Many young people snare rabbit around Bird north of the Limestone River. Christine Massan (2010) states in the past there was an abundance of small game, such as rabbit and chickens, “People were able to leave their homes and go into the bush and get what they needed (personal communication).” Now people are required to travel further away from their homes to obtain this food. Birds that are sought are ptarmigans, spruce grouse, stick chickens; all of which are hunted in the bush off the Conawapa Road. Fur bearing animals include: marten, beaver, muskrat, fox, wolf and lynx.



Figure 25 – Marten trap located on Trapline #5. Photo credit: Wendy Ross



Figure 26 – Robert Beardy, Frank Beardy (Trapline #5 Holder) and Wendy Ross March 28, 2011. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross



Figure 27 – Frank Beardy and Randy Naismith Jr. at Franks cabin March 28, 2011. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross

Fox Lake Peoples Ancient Ancestors

Two heritage sites have been identified at the location of the proposed Keewatinoow converter station by Manitoba Hydro Heritage Consultants, Northern Lights Heritage Services. At site one there is a high probability that a burial and several burials at this site. During their examination of the site, pre-contact tools that include stone flakes and a micro-blade were uncovered.



Figure 28 – Pre-contact micro blade that was unearthed at the Keewatinoow Converter Station Site. Photo Credit: Northern Lights Heritage Service

Drilling in relation to the project's pre-construction activities has impacted site two, which Fox Lake Heritage Advisor Kevin Brownlee deemed as having a high

probability of historic and pre-contact importance in part because it is located on a large gravel ridge where rock features and older historic cut stumps are evident. Fox Lake recommends further investigation of both sites as soon as possible and steps taken to ensure that no further damage is to occur.

Fox Lake's assessment processes have documented both the historic and current importance of the Limestone River. Many of the old campsites used over the past century are still visible and some even continue to be used today (Colomb 2011). As a tributary of the Kischissippi, the Limestone River was one of the main routes of travel from York Factory to inland locals especially after the establishment of the railway.



Figure 29 - Snow fence to protect potential burials at Keewatinow Converter Station site. Photo Credit: Wendy Ross



Figure 30 – Aerial photograph of burial sites at Keewatinoow Converter Station Site. Photo credit: Northern Lights Heritage Services



Figure 31 - Aerial photograph of burial sites at Keewatinoow Converter Station Site. Photo credit: Northern Lights Heritage Services



Figure 32 – Kitayatisuk Elizabeth Beardy and Catherine Beardy at Keewatinoow site. Blessing the perturbed final resting places. Photo Credit: Northern Lights Heritage Services

Synthesis and Recommendations

BiPole III & Keewatinoow Converter Station

Access and Resource Use

BiPole III and the Keewatinoow Converter Station will further fragment an already fragmented landscape and therefore increase the accessibility by non-Fox Lake people to more and more areas. Past history has demonstrated that an increased human population in Gillam (i.e., permanent and semi-permanent workforce) is positively correlated with a decrease in certain populations of fish and wildlife especially those considered desirable by recreational hunters and fishers. In fact, this is not an impact associated with the future construction of Keeyask, BiPole III, Converter Station, and Conawapa but rather an impact associated with current pre-construction activities in relation to the aforementioned projects. Fox Lake harvesters out on the land have recently documented the over-fishing of brook trout at 5-mile Creek apparently precipitated by the unauthorized disclosure of the GPS locations of prime brook trout fishing locations to Gillam recreational fishers. From a conservation perspective, this places additional pressure on already stressed fish and wildlife populations, including brook trout and sturgeon, species favored by Fox Lake treaty fishers.

Thirty years after the construction of the Limestone project, brook trout populations have experienced a modest incline. To prevent the overfishing of brook trout, Fox Lake suggests that no provincial fishing licenses be issued for the duration of the pre and construction period. Through time honoured Inninuwak values, many Fox Lake Core Kitayatisuk and Harvesters have shared that they have a responsibility to protect Aski, and this includes instilling Inninu hunting protocols through intergenerational knowledge transmission, of taking only what you need (do not overkill). This is an inherent Fox Lake Inninuwak view of the natural world. It also demonstrates traditional governance and responsibility towards Aski¹⁰.

Fox Lake harvesters also assert that moose and caribou are likely to be affected similarly. The Aski Keskentamowin work clearly demonstrates that the area surrounding

¹⁰ Please see: Agger, L. (2010). *Ninan*. Unpublished Document

the Conawapa Road including the vicinity surrounding Bird is a critical area to Fox Lake harvesters, in particular for hunting moose and caribou. The community is deeply concerned about how these and future activities will cause severe distress to animal populations, resulting in the decline of such species such as moose, geese and caribou.

Additional roads, camps, and pathways for transmission lines will cause disruptions to caribou and other wildlife movements causing a shift in their movements, migratory paths, and/or overall behavior as a result. The potential development of the BiPole III transmission lines will likely increase predation on caribou and moose by wolves, especially since the community reports more and more wolves in recent years. Fox Lake harvesters are very concerned that their ability to obtain Inninu foods, and thus practice and pass on Inninu traditions to the young members of their families will be greatly hindered. Consistent with past experience, current and future Fox Lake harvesters will be forced to travel further to hunt, fish, trap and gather as areas historically and currently used by Fox Lake people and their ancestors are taken up and affected by hydroelectric projects.

The concentration of harvesting in areas made accessible by more and more roads and corridors has increased the number of conflicts between various user-groups including Fox Lake members, members of other First Nation communities, or other Manitobans, including Gillam residents and Manitoba Hydro employees. It is notable that Fox Lake Kitayatisuk report a lack of conflict between users of various groups prior to dam-building including between indigenous and non-indigenous people. Impacts that affect the community's access to and harvest of key resources will undoubtedly have social, economic, and cultural impacts. For example, this project will make it even more difficult to transfer knowledge about the environment and activities practiced on the land and water to the youth. This multi-generational effect looks to continue in its duration.

Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters are deeply concerned about the disturbances caused by construction and pre-construction activities. Many people have seen the decline of animal populations such as caribou and moose since the start of

hydro development in the region. Measures will be necessary to protect the rights of hunters and trappers, for example, it is recommended that there be a concerted effort to enforce current moose and goose hunting protocols that restrict the times and places Hydro-related activities occur during the hunting season. Also, trapping will be affected by construction. For example, excessive noise from construction will disturb fur-bearing animals and is likely to result in a significant decrease income for trappers.

There will be increased access into Fox Lake people's traditional territory as a result of the construction of additional roads, access ways, and from the new transmission lines. Fox Lake is concerned about the over-harvesting of animals and fish when construction of Keeyask, Keewatinoow Converter Station, Generation Outlet Transmission lines, and eventually Conawapa within its traditional territory. The present and future economic implications of additional hydro development in Fox Lake people's traditional territory will result in an inability to procure and consume high quality Inninu foods, which is essential to health, and there will be an increased reliance on store-bought foods. It is recommended that Fox Lake peoples have the power to limit access by outsiders to time-honoured hunting areas. There is an urgency to begin discussions about how Fox Lake and Manitoba Hydro will elevate the effects of the Keewatinoow Converter Station, BiPole III and potentially the Conawapa Generating Station on harvesters. This could be in the form of offset hunting and fishing sites and monetary compensation.

Aski Keskentamowin – How to survive on Aski

Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters assert that Aski Keskentamowin must be taught to the children and youth. As mentioned earlier in this report, the spring Goose hunt and fall Moose hunt is a very important cultural event. Events such as these provide an opportunity for important social ties to be renewed each year. They have created an opportunity for Fox Lake youth to acquire knowledge from their Kitayatisuk and Harvesters about proper respect for animals and the land. Youth are taught how to hunt and prepare geese. The event is essential for providing land-based education to the youth who are not immersed on the land in the same way their parents and

grandparents were. In the summer of 2011, at a Core Kitayatisuk and Harvesters Meeting, attendees envisioned an overall plan to improve and augment current land based education. Many Kitayatisuk and Harvesters also feel that it is important to communicate with non-Fox Lake children and youth about their perspectives on the land. Fox Lake recommends that there are measures and funding implemented to continue and expand this type of activity. This knowledge is essential to Inninu social development as it teaches children and youth important life lessons and values of their ancestors such as courage, respect, purpose, persistence and patience.

Wildlife

Inninuwak Aski Keskentamowin indicates that a number of fish and wildlife species have declined drastically or disappeared altogether from a number of areas since hydro development commenced in Fox Lake's territory. This includes caribou, brook trout, sturgeon, perch, goldeye, and beaver. Fox Lake harvesters are worried that these species will not be able to cope or rebound, especially since some (e.g., brook trout) have only begun to return, and have not been fully re-established. Fox Lake harvesters assert that the population decline of many wildlife species is linked to:

- 1) construction noise;
- 2) increased hunting pressure;
- 3) loss of critical habitat including calving and calf-rearing areas;
- 4) loss of habitat including important feeding grounds;
- 5) fragmentation of habitat caused by construction of roads, converter stations, and transmission lines, and;
- 6) disruption of vital migratory paths

Individually these represent great barriers to maintaining wildlife populations but collectively they heighten pressure on wildlife within the region. Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and harvesters recommend additional studies on wolves to better understand Hydro impacts on habitat and behaviour as well as impacts on caribou. These studies must

include the participation of Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters consistent with Fox Lake's plant and animal sampling protocol.

The framework is as follows:

1. Fox Lake Kitayatisuk, Harvesters and Manitoba Hydro consultants collaborate on the rationale for collecting plant samples.
2. Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters collaborate with Manitoba Hydro about what plants are most important to be sampled.
3. Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters are to collaborate with Manitoba Hydro Scientists about where the plant and animal samples are to be obtained.
4. Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters collaborate with Manitoba Hydro about what time of year is appropriate to collect certain plant or animal samples (certain plants are more potent at certain times of the year which dictates when gathering occurs).
5. Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters are to collaborate with Manitoba Hydro about what protocols will be followed in the collection and treatment of plants to ensure kewaypukitinamok (plants and animals are returned to the places where they were originally collected and certain other protocols followed);
6. Manitoba Hydro consultants are to meet with the Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters prior to the sampling to discuss all aspects of the initiative, and;
7. Manitoba Hydro consultants meet with Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters after the samples are tested to communicate test results.

This arrangement is formalized in a contract both in Cree and English to include appropriate remuneration for sample collection and activity coordination. It is important to emphasize that the Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters wishes to work collaboratively with Manitoba Hydro and its consultants to ensure successful studies.

Caribou

The *Oral History Project*, the *Preliminary Sturgeon Report* and the *Keeyask Traditional Report* all contribute to corroborating Fox Lake people's knowledge base of caribou. Caribou is a vital food source for Fox Lake, and as a result of hydroelectric development, Fox Lake harvesters indicate that many herds and species are lower in numbers and less likely to migrate through the region, with the exception of the barren land that inhabits the region year round. Harvesters indicate hydro development and flooding has made it increasingly difficult for caribou to safely cross the Kischi Sipi. Aski Keskentamowin indicates that historically caribou crossed the Kischi Sipi at its narrowest points, and would swim from island to island until they reached the other side of the river. A main caribou crossing location in the BiPole III and Keewatinoow Converter Station study area is at Conawapa, and at the Flathead rapids. Fox Lake harvesters fear that they will not be able to access caribou and other large game during the construction of Keewatinoow Converter Station, BiPole III and eventually Conawapa Generating Station projects. Fifteen to twenty years of construction and disturbances may result in the permanent demise of caribou in Fox Lake people's traditional territory.

Importance of Fox Lake Aski Keskentamowin Studies

Since the completion of Fox Lake's *Preliminary Traditional Knowledge Study on Sturgeon* in 2008, and the *Keeyask Traditional Knowledge* study in 2009-2010, many lessons were learned and a greater appreciation for the importance of this work has been solidified. There is a sense of urgency to document the knowledge held by the Kitayatisuk and Harvesters users. Many Kitayatisuk and harvesters possessing an intimate knowledge of, in particular, the Kischi Sipi prior to the dams, have passed on and tragically, their knowledge is forever lost. Some of this knowledge, specifically related to the pre-flood Kischi Sipi, has gone with them and this stresses the importance of completing Aski Keskentamowin studies in an expeditious and judicious manner. That said, Aski Keskentamowin continues to be generated among all generations including children, youth and young adults. This work is important not only for its contribution to better decision making about hydro development in general, but for its

intrinsic value to the community and its potential to help preserve local, traditional, and historical knowledge. The need to involve as many people from the older generations in the overall Inninu lead impact assessment process has been highlighted in our findings and recommendations.

Given that Manitoba Hydro and the Province of Manitoba undertook very few biophysical baseline studies and no traditional knowledge studies of the Region prior to the construction of Kelsey or Kettle Generating Stations, Fox Lake people remain the best source for historical information about the overall biophysical environment within their traditional territory. Through their longstanding use of Aski, Fox Lake people have observed numerous changes and witnessed the impacts that continue to resonate throughout the traditional territory following hydroelectric development.

Aski Keskentamowin is dynamic, constantly evolving, and not to be viewed as static, particularly when observing environmental and other changes caused by hydroelectric development in Fox Lake people's traditional territory. The Keewatinoow Converter Station & BiPole III Aski Keskentamowin Report is the third community led study of its kind, and as this work progresses and additional information is collected and documented, this will allow Fox Lake to be better equipped to understand the changes that members continue to experience and document in an appropriate manner. Documenting allows Fox Lake to preserve this knowledge for the future generations.

It is recommended that Aski Keskentamowin studies be developed in collaboration with Fox Lake and perhaps with other impacted communities as part of long-term monitoring. This is an important concept and Fox Lake is greatly interested in continuing this work to further understand and prepare for further hydroelectric industrialization in their territory.

Additional Studies and Asserting Fox Lake Protocol

With guidance from the Kitayatisuk and Harvesters, Fox Lake Aski Keskentamowin researchers are finding new methods to address hydroelectric development within their traditional territory, this including the establishment of a

venue for specific concerns to be addressed. One concern addressed by Jack Massan (2010) is the reasoning Manitoba Hydro undertakes in the selection of important species to study. For example, there is a lack of scientific study on Burbot. Burbot is a very important Inninu food; it is a delicacy and is often provided to Kitayatisuk as a sign of respect. It is recommended that Manitoba Hydro and Fox Lake Kitayatisuk and Harvesters meet to discuss the important species that need to be studied collaboratively. Aski Keskentamowin should be done prior to undertaking major western type biophysical studies to ensure that important community issues relating to environmental assessment are properly addressed. Many Kitayatisuk are concerned over the lack of scientific studies on rabbits and chickens. This illustrates the need to take a collaborative approach to research, which can be mitigated if Manitoba Hydro changes their research practices and allows for community collaboration in the determination of what species to study or where to examine for heritage items. It is important to note that upon consultation with Kitayatisuk and Harvesters, when asked what species are important to them, they often say 'everything is important'. Without community collaboration in determining the research agenda, Fox Lake's perspective is that Manitoba Hydro's research process is critically flawed, which became evident this past summer when it was found that the preferred site for the Keewatinoow Converter Station may disturb Fox Lake people's ancient ancestors' final resting places. Fox Lake is in discussion to develop heritage policy protocols that future developers will need to comply with.

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Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Interview Guide/Questions

Bipole III-Converter Station Project – Keewatinoow Site Station

Explanation: Why we are doing these interviews.
Why we are collecting information/data.
Where the Keewatinoow Converter Station is being built.
Which area the Bipole III will be running through and what it will affect.
Whose trap lines it will affect.

Introductory Questions

How long have you lived in this area/Bird?
Do you know this area well?
What parts of this area are you most familiar with?
How do you travel to the areas?
Where on the map are your best travel routes?
What other travel routes do you know of in this area?
Do you have a trap line and where is it located?
Can you show me where it is located?
Do you know where the old campsites are located?
Whereabouts are some of the old campsites that you remember using, or you remember your family using?
Are there cabins at these campsites?
What kinds of buildings were located there?
Which campsites do you use a tent?
When were tents used?
Can you show me which campsites had tents?

Fishing

Where do you fish?
What kind of fish do you catch?
Is the fish suitable to eat from this area?
What does the fish taste like?
How does the taste differ from other areas that you have fished at?
What changes have you noticed over the years regarding the taste and texture of fish?
Do you harvest wood and what areas? Where are the best locations to gather wood?
What are the Cree names for those areas?

Plants

Do you gather and use medicinal plants? What, if any, medicinal or other purpose plants do you gather and use?

Where do you gather them?

What are some of the things you look for when gathering certain kinds of plants?

Are there certain seasons for gathering certain plants or parts of plants?

What is the significance of this?

On your travels in these areas, do you notice any berries or herbs? What kind?

When was the last time you gathered plants in this area?

How often do you gather plants? How important is this area for plant gathering? Do you intend to use this area in the future?

Hunting – Small Game

What kinds of small game do you hunt for food?

When do you undertake these activities?

Do you harvest small game year round (i.e.)– rabbits chickens- spruce hens, ruffed grouse-ptarmigan and sharp-tail) –beaver muskrats?

What parts of the small game do you not use? Why?

Trapping

Where do you traps in the area?

What types of animals?

What do you trap?

What do you do with the fur/skin?

Have developments (roads, transmission lines, dams) affected your ability to trap?

How have these developments affected your trapping success?

Caribou

Do you hunt caribou and where do you go to hunt?

When and where are the caribou migrating routes?

What changes do you notice to their annual migration routes?

Where are the caribou crossings?

Do caribou cross the Kischi Sipi in the area downstream of Limestone? Where?

At what time of the year?

How has the presence of dams on the river has affected the ability of caribou to cross the river?

Where are calving areas found?

What is so special about these areas?

Are there any calving areas you are aware of?

How important do you think these areas are as critical habitat for caribou?

Do you see caribou along the Conawapa road? If so, where have you seen them?

What type of caribou are they (e.g., Churchill, woodland, etc)?

What are the physical differences between the Qaminurjuak and Woodlands and Pen Island caribou?

Are there different types of caribou in the area?

Are they there all year, or do they show up at a particular time of the year?
Do you know of any caribou migration routes in the area?
Can you draw these on a map?
How many Caribou do you see together at one time?

Moose

Do you hunt moose? Have you hunted moose in the past?
Can you identify on the map where you hunt or have hunted moose in the area?
What changes have you seen to the moose population over the years?
What do you think has caused these changes?
What role do wolves play in the moose populations?
Do you ever see wolves when you are hunting moose?
What kinds of physical changes have you noticed in the hides and flesh of moose?
How have the dams on the Kischi Sipi affected your ability to hunt moose?

Grave Sites

Are you aware of any gravesites within the Bipole III and the converter station sites?
If there are gravesites what do you think Manitoba Hydro should do to protect these sites?

Other

The Keewatinoow Converter Station is being built at the Conawapa site. How will it affect your activities such as trapping, hunting and recreation specific to this region?
How about other areas?

What kinds of maps have you seen during the community consultations regarding the location of the Bipole III Transmission line?

How do you believe it will affect your trap line? How do you believe it will affect the land? Other activities?

What kinds of rivers, creeks and ponds in this area? How do you think the transmission line will affect them?

How do you think the transmission line will affect the vegetation, the animals/birds, the hunting, the fishing, and the hunting?

Appendix 2: Bipole III and Keewatinoow Converter Station Infrastructure Impact Assessment

Statistic Table Prepared by Grant Wiseman

FLCN TK Lines	Total Lines	Impacted Lines	Impacted KM
Berry Picking	15	1	54.09
Community Recreation	1	0	0.00
Fishing	36	19	526.29
Hunting	37	12	297.11
Medicinal Picking	17	3	46.85
Timber Harvesting	3	0	0.00
Trapping	14	7	242.99
Youth Training	1	1	0.00
Total	124	43	1167.33

FLCN TK Polygons	Total Polygons	Impacted Polygons	Impacted KM²
Berry Picking	9	5	351.38
Hunting	16	5	481.12
Medicinal Picking	6	4	246.46
Timber Harvesting	6	3	767.33
Other	1	1	8.95
Total	38	18	1855.24

FLCN TK Points	Total Points	Impacted Points
Berry Picking	2	1
Burial Site	12	0
Cabin	27	0
Camping	5	0
Fishing	4	0
Hunting	1	0
Total	51	1

Appendix 3: Fox Lake Traditional Territory Maps