

Integrating Aboriginal Values into Land-Use and Resource Management

Second Quarterly Report: April to June, 2000

1. Project Background and Goals

This project contributes to the “values” component of the Ecosystems Based Management (EBM) pilot project being implemented by Manitoba’s Department of Conservation on the east side of Lake Winnipeg (Ecoregion 90). IISD’s goal is to develop a process that a) helps Aboriginal people identify the values their community places on the forested landscape around them, b) effectively expresses those values to decision-makers in the provincial government, the forest industry and other stakeholders, and c) stimulates discussion by all stakeholders on ways to incorporate Aboriginal values into land use and resource management. To achieve this objective IISD intends to:

- Determine community values by adapting an innovative method to local conditions. This method, called appreciative inquiry, empowers local people to build a shared vision based on community strengths. It then helps to develop strategies to turn the vision into reality. IISD is using appreciative inquiry to determine how an Aboriginal community values the landscape around it over the course of a year. This valuation will be as holistic as possible, and could include monetary value from trapping, subsistence value from hunting, medicinal value from gathering herbs, spiritual and cultural value from living in a forested landscape, and other values determined by Aboriginal people themselves.
- Build a community vision and action plan based on the shared values that have been identified using appreciative inquiry.
- Record the results of the appreciative inquiry on videotape, producing a set of programs that portray the community’s values and vision accurately and powerfully.
- Communicate local values to decision-makers in the provincial government and to other stakeholders through focus-group sessions in which the video programs are played and discussed.

2. Goals for the Second Quarter

- Complete the first video sequence, capturing results from the initial round of appreciative interviews.
- Complete a community review of the edited videotape prior to its final production.
- Form a focus group based on recommendations by Skownan's Chief and Council, Gord Jones (Department of Conservation) and Dale Hutchinson (Indian and Northern Affairs).

3. Team Members

During the second quarter of the project, IISD worked closely with the following team members:

- Neil Ford: IISD team leader (April)
- Graham Ashford: IISD team leader (May - June)
- Jo-Ellen Parry: IISD forestry and community development specialist
- Alan Reid: Skownan team leader
- Elaine Houle: Skownan team member
- Ken Catcheway: Skownan team member
- Delores McKay: Skownan team member
- Sterling Catcheway: Skownan team member
- Nelson Catcheway: Skownan Community Liaison
- Archie Catcheway: Elder-adviser
- Harvey Payne: Project Advisor
- Karen Stock: Project Advisor
- Ron Missyabit: Video Producer
- Ryan Slater: Camera Operator
- Jessie Green: Sound Technician

In May, Neil Ford left IISD to take a position as a Senior Communications Advisor for UNICEF in Africa. Graham Ashford replaced Neil as team leader, and Jo-Ellen Parry was hired. Jo-Ellen brings a background in forest policy, participatory development and conflict resolution to the project. Michael Catcheway also left the Skownan interview team after becoming the Band Police Constable.

4. First Video Production

The objective of the first video is to capture the highlights of the initial round of appreciative interviews and communicate them in an accurate and engaging way to focus group members. The short video will allow focus group participants to hear stories from local people about peak moments and future goals in Skownan and to see the forests, rivers and lakes on which the community places such great

value. More informed discussions will then be possible between community representatives and senior government and industry representatives.

Dates for the initial video interviews were first suggested at the January community consultation as part of the seasonal calendar exercise (see First Quarterly Report Annex A). Detailed planning for the video took place in Winnipeg on March 30, and a shooting schedule was developed for April 11 to 15. Ron Missyabit, executive producer of I.C.E. Productions, and the interview team discussed the traditional activities that they would like to videotape (those that best expressed the community's values and vision), and identified the people who should be interviewed about each activity. They created a production schedule from this session, which was modified on location.

Video schedule:

Monday, April 10th

- Travel and preparation.

Tuesday, April 11th

- **Net fishing with William and Dennis Catcheway.** William and Dennis talk about commercial fishing as they pull in their nets from the East Waterhen River. They share stories of how they learned the skills from their parents and talk about why the activity is an important part of their lives.
- **Smoking fish with Archie Catcheway and his grandson Kyle Catcheway.** Archie shows Kyle how to clean and smoke mullet. Dennis Catcheway provides the fish and assists in their cleaning. Archie talks about the importance of passing down traditional skills to the next generation.
- **Nelson Catcheway and Alan Reid cull a lame bison from the herd.** Nelson and Alan separate the lame bison from the rest of the herd, shoot it and perform a ceremony to give thanks for its life. Nelson talks about the significance of the bison to the people of Skownan. Lambert Catcheway smudges the guns with sweet grass, and then skins the bison with help from his two sons.
- **Wesley Catcheway at the fish hatchery.** Wesley describes the set-up and operation of Skownan's fish hatchery. He speaks of the success that the community has had in stocking nearby lakes and generating economic opportunities for local people.

Wednesday, April 12th

- **Goose hunt with Alan Reid, Arnold, Timothy and Dean Catcheway.** Alan, Arnold, Timothy and Dean demonstrate how to use goose decoys. Timothy and Dean call a pair of geese close but are unable to bring home a meal. Timothy and Dean talk about the thrill of being out on the land, while Arnold shares his dream of establishing a lodge and snowmobile trails near Chitek Lake.
- **Interviews with grade eight and nine students.** Students from grades eight and nine share what they most enjoy about living in Skownan, and what they would like to see in the community's future.
- **Catherine Catcheway making moccasins.** Catherine shares memories of life in Skownan with her husband who had recently passed away. Deloris McKay, and Elaine, Marie and Charlotte Catcheway ask questions about Catherine's life and learn the art of making moccasins.
- **Marie and Gordon Nepinak tapping maple trees.** Marie describes the process of tapping maple trees and making maple syrup. She recalls the joy she felt as a child playing in the forest and helping her parents tap trees. She explains the importance of ensuring that traditional skills are not forgotten.

Thursday, April 13th

- **Lambert Catcheway butchers the bison for Treaty Day.** Lambert butchers the bison and explains how the meat will be given to local Elders, shared on Treaty Day and sold in the community store. He discusses the nutritive benefits of eating wild meat.
- **Clinton Campbell, Dale Tarty and Sterling Catcheway check a trap net.** Dale and Sterling check a trap net on the West Waterhen River. Dale demonstrates the process of trapping fish, a technique that has recently caught on in Skownan. He shares stories of fishing with his parents and muskrat trapping with his friends.
- **Muskrat trapping with Wesley and Patrick Catcheway.** Wesley and Patrick demonstrate how to trap muskrat in West Waterhen River and get a surprise – someone has put a Pickerel in their trap as a practical joke! Patrick shares his thoughts on why he enjoys spending time on the land in Skownan.
- **Community Meeting.** On Thursday evening the team called a community meeting to discuss the project's goals and approach with interested band members. The team played highlights of the audio taped appreciative

interviews that had recently been conducted. Community members provided suggestions to make the project a success.

The interviews were informal and conducted in the preferred language of the participant. The team ensured that the interviews were conducted in locations where the people felt comfortable – a place that would promote stories. To complement the interviews, Ryan and Jessie recorded a range of “B roll” or background shots in the community. In total, approximately nine hours of footage was recorded. A rough-cut of the video was produced in early May.

5. May 11th meeting with Chief and Council (Winnipeg)

IISD hosted a meeting with Chief and Council in Winnipeg on May 11th, during which the project goals and activities were discussed and the rough-cut of the video was reviewed. Chief and Council restated the importance of developing better ways of involving aboriginal communities in resource planning. They also expressed the need to build community plans that reinforce local strengths and promote activities valued by the community. They were impressed with the interviews - particularly the power of hearing local people tell stories of their accomplishments and sharing dreams of their future. They provided several useful suggestions regarding how to make the video more effective in conveying these voices. They agreed that band members should review the video to ensure that it accurately represented their values and visions.

IISD and Skownan’s leaders also discussed the formation and timing of the focus groups. The Chief and Council indicated that the community should have sufficient time to articulate their values and ideas for Skownan before the first focus group was convened. Based on the ideas that emerged, the band could then identify important focus group members that they wished to have present. They recommended that the first focus group be held in September, with others to follow in November and January. In the interim, further interviews would be conducted and community meetings held to ensure a high level of participation.

6. Community Review of the Video

To encourage a participatory process and ensure that the video accurately reflects local strengths and perspectives, IISD made five copies of the rough-cut and sent these to the community for review. The videos were circulated within the community for approximately four weeks, and were played for both small groups and individuals. The video was generally well received, although suggestions were made for improvements. Comments were collected which will be integrated into the final version.

The project team also produced a community update and distributed it to every household on the reserve. The combination of these two activities helped raise the

profile of the project in the community, increasing attendance at community meetings and making subsequent appreciative interviewing easier.

7. Press Conference

On June 22, IISD held a press conference to officially announce the project. The event coincided with IISD's tenth anniversary board meeting, and was chaired by Jacque Gerin, the Chairman of the Institute's board of directors. The primary speakers were Nelson Catcheway (Skownan Community Education Coordinator) and Graham Ashford (IISD Project Manager). The Department of Conservation and Indian and Northern Affairs were invited to make presentations. Both expressed support for the announcement, but neither wished to make a presentation. Gord Jones, Director of Forestry, was present and answered questions related to the IISD appreciative inquiry project and the province's Ecosystem Based Management Pilot Project. The Winnipeg Free Press and several other organizations attended the event and expressed interest in the project. While subsequent coverage of the story was minimal, IISD was able to develop new ties to a range of people interested in sustainable aboriginal development.

8. Planning for the second round of interviews

On June 7th the Skownan project team hosted a meeting to review the results of the project to date and plan out the next round of appreciative interviews. The team discussed different possible community members who might be available for interviews. IISD encouraged the interview team to speak to a broad cross section of band members. A number of ideas were explored for the next video interviews.

During the meeting, the interview team members indicated that they would like more guidance on developing effective appreciative questions. In response the following questions were developed. They were meant only as a guide: the interviewers were encouraged to experiment around the themes find out what style of questions produced the best stories and goals.

- 1. Skownan is in an area of wonderful natural resources such as forests, lakes and rivers, and fresh air. People in Skownan value these resources for the many benefits that they provide. When you think back on your life in Skownan, what do you think are the most important benefits that the land and waters provide to you, your family and the community? Please be specific.*
- 2. What activities do you most enjoy doing? What makes these activities so meaningful for you?*
- 3. Can you think of one particular incident when you were out on the land and felt really excited and fortunate to live where you do - really close to nature? (Perhaps when you were out with your parents or friends?) Who was there and what made it so special?*

4. *How do you feel when you take your children out on the land or show them things that were taught to you by your parents and grandparents? How do they feel?*
5. *The people of Skownan have many skills; some have been passed down from their parents and grandparents while others have been learned new. What skills do you think are most important to a strong and close community?*
6. *When you think back on your life in Skownan, can you think of a time when the bond between people in the community was closest? What was it that made people feel so connected? What were they doing together?*
7. *The people of Skownan have made many remarkable achievements. When you think back, which achievement stands out in your mind among them? Please be specific about who was there and who did what. How was it possible?*
8. *Aboriginal people are known for their skills and their respect for the land. How is this respect built?*
9. *Do you have any ideas about how those activities that are most important to the community can provide new economic opportunities while respecting the land?*
10. *If you had one wish for Skownan, what would it be?*
11. *If people from another First Nation came to Skownan, what would you want them to see?*

9. Next Steps

In the next quarter, the project will prepare for the first focus group meeting between community members and representatives of industry and government in Winnipeg. For the focus group session to be a success, the following tasks must be accomplished:

- **Conduct further appreciative interviews.** Given the Chief and Council's desire to consult widely within the band, the second round of community interviews was planned for the period June 8 to July 15. A goal of 40 new interviews was set.
- **Move from a community vision to an action plan.** In addition to further interviews, the team must now enrich its preliminary vision by gathering experiences and suggestions from a wider range of people, and discussing its contents in more detail at community meetings and in small group sessions. They will develop a detailed community vision, which will be approved by Skownan's Chief and Council, then create an action plan to implement the vision.
- **Complete the final edit of the spring season video.** IISD will work with I.C.E Productions to incorporate the community's suggestions into a final version of the spring season video.

- **Produce a fall season video.** I.C.E Productions will videotape community activities and interview local people from September 11 to 15. They will edit these sequences into a short production expressing the values and vision of Skownan with special reference to fall activities. This video will be used to facilitate discussion at the second focus group meeting.
- **Form the focus group.** Gord Jones, Dale Hutchison and Skownan's Chief, Bernard Catcheway, have agreed to identify potential focus group members and invite 12 to 15 people to form the focus group, including two or three representatives of the community. The focus group should also include senior representatives of the provincial government (assistant deputy minister level), as well as representatives of the forest, hydro and tourism industries. IISD will brief all focus group members about the project before its first meeting, which is being planned for the fall of 2000.