

Integrating Aboriginal Values into Land-Use and Resource Management

Fifth Quarterly Report: January to March, 2001

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 holds in relation to 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 Fifth Quarter

- Complete production of the project’s first video, capturing the values of the people of Skownan. Images for this video will be drawn from the footage taken during the spring and fall video shoots.
- Complete filming of the last video sequences, capturing the results of the final appreciative inquiry interviews. Footage from this shoot will be used to produce the second of the project’s two videos.

- Convene further workshops and small-group meetings to add detail to Skownan's community action plan.
- Finalise arrangements for the first focus group meeting to be held in April (final dates now set for May 30, 31—participants invited).

3. Results

All of the goals for the fifth quarter were achieved, with the exception of holding additional community meetings to refine Skownan's action plan. A community workshop is planned for early April. As well, completion of arrangements for the first focus group meeting was partially delayed by the project team's decision to hold this event following the appointment of the Department of Conservation's new Director of Aboriginal Relations.

4. Team Members

During the fifth quarter of the project, IISD worked closely with the following individuals:

- Graham Ashford: IISD team leader
- 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
- Bonnie Dickie: Video producer
- Tina Kakekapetum Schultz: Interviewer
- John Gurdebeke: Videographer
- Dana Seabrook: Sound technician

IISD continues to work in cooperation with Dana Rungay and Chris Loewen of Vision Seekers, so that duplication of community consultations are minimised.

5. Completion of the First Video

During January and February, the IISD team coordinated several meetings with individuals from Skownan and the video team to discuss the rough cut of the first video, which was completed in December. Suggestions for improving the video were discussed and incorporated into the final

version, which was completed at the end of February. Copies of the completed video were distributed to team members in Skownan to share with the community, and to projects funders.

6. Planning for the Focus Group Workshops

On January 26th, Graham Ashford and Jo-Ellen Parry met with Gord Jones, Director of Forestry, Manitoba Conservation, and Mike Molinski, Environmental and Natural Resource Analyst, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, to provide a progress report and develop future plans. Graham reviewed the project's accomplishments to date, noting that with the completion of the appreciative interviews, data analysis sessions and community workshops, the project was well placed to prepare for the focus group meetings. The purpose of the focus group meetings was discussed and determined to be:

- to assess the value of appreciative inquiry as a tool for community development and resource management;
- to raise awareness of Aboriginal peoples relationship with the land, and how communities are affected by changes made to the landscape; and
- to encourage exploration of processes that provide meaningful community involvement in decision-making.

Instead of holding three focus group meetings involving a consistent cadre of invited participants, it was decided that a minimum of two meetings will be held each involving different participants. The possibility of inviting participants from the natural resources sector to one workshop and from the social services sector to the second workshop was discussed. With this change, it would be possible to hold one-day workshops for each group during which both videos are shown.

Gord indicated that as part of the restructuring process taking place within the Conservation Department, a new position is being created – Director of Aboriginal Relations. It was decided that the focus groups meetings should be held after the appointment of this new Director to ensure his/her attendance. Early April was set as a tentative time for the focus group workshops to take place (the dates for the focus group have now been finalised for May 30 and 31).

7. Third Video Shoot

The third and final video shoot took place from March 1st to 5th in Skownan. The purpose of this winter video shoot was to capture highlights from the appreciative interviews in an accurate and engaging manner. Building on the first video and a request from the team in Skownan, the video crew also focused on capturing individual's visions for their community's future, particularly those related to livelihoods and economic development.

Several pre-production activities were undertaken to ensure the success of the third video shoot. Main themes for the shoot, such as fishing and marketing local products, were identified, along with activities related to these themes. The team in Skownan identified and contacted individuals to be interviewed and made the logistical arrangements needed. A schedule for the video shoot was developed and circulated. As well, Bonnie Dickie contacted the Principle of Skownan's school to

make special arrangements for the video team to film some of its students. A meeting to finalize arrangements was held in Winnipeg on February 26th.

Video Schedule:

Thursday, March 1st

Jo-Ellen and the video team of Bonnie Dickie, John Gurdebeke, Tina Kakekapetum-Schultz and Dana Seabrook met in Winnipeg and travelled to Skownan. They met with the Skownan team in the early afternoon to finalize plans for the video shoot. The video crew then went out into the community to gather some initial “B-roll” or background footage while Tina met with one of the individuals to be interviewed later in the week. The team re-grouped in the late afternoon to capture one sequence on tape.

- **Building an arena and establishing a potato garden with Ken Catcheway.** Standing in Skownan’s outdoor rink, Ken shares his desire for an arena in Skownan to assist in promoting healthy lifestyles and providing youth with an alternative to drugs and alcohol. He speaks of the importance of recreation to the people of Skownan, of the success of their youth in various sports and of how recreation brings the community together. He also shares his idea of establishing a community garden and growing potatoes to be sold locally.

Friday, March 2nd

On this day, the video crew travelled by bombardier and skidoo to Chitek Lake. The following sequences were taped:

- **Ice fishing with Francis Catcheway, Wesley Catcheway and Paul Marion.** Francis discusses the economic importance of fishing to the people of Skownan while he, Wesley and Paul check and set nets. They describe their activities, and speak of how they enjoy being out on the land and spending time with each other.
- **Ecotourism with Francis and Wesley Catcheway.** In front of a cabin on the edge of Chitek Lake, Francis and Wesley describe their hopes of establishing an ecotourism operation at Chitek Lake. They share their plan of having a few cabins from which tourists could go hunting, see the wild wood bison and enjoy the peace of Chitek Lake. Francis and Wesley discuss the steps they have already taken to bring their vision into being, and some of the obstacles they need to overcome.

Saturday, March 3rd

The following sequences were taped:

- **Planting trees and educating youth with Charlotte Nepinak.** Charlotte speaks of the importance to her of the trees around Skownan. She shares her vision of showing children the value of trees and encouraging them to engage in tree planting. She emphasizes her belief in seeing the forest as more than a source of timber, of using its resources only as needed, and expresses a desire for greater cooperation between the people of Skownan and the provincial government in the management of the land.

- **Fish packing with Cameron Catcheway.** Cameron, with the assistance of Ivan Dick, demonstrates how he measures, sorts, packs and records the fish caught by Skownan's fishermen for delivery to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Board in Winnipeg. Speaking outside the fish packing facility, he shares his vision of taking over the fish packing facility currently owned by the Band, expanding its operations and employing more people in the community. He also speaks of the importance of conserving the fish stocks in the lakes surrounding Skownan.

In the late afternoon, the video team recorded more B-roll before leaving the community.

Sunday, March 4th

- **Playing hockey with Skownan youth.** Brayden Catcheway, Garrett Houle, Melvin Marion, Kyle Catcheway and Wynn Catcheway play hockey on Skownan's outdoor rink. Brayden speaks about the importance of hockey to him and the benefits of having an enclosed arena.
- **Operating a small business with Karen Catcheway.** While making lunch for customers in her pool hall/restaurant, Karen speaks about starting her business in the basement of her home and her desire to expand her business.
- **Management of the domesticated herd of wood bison with Alan Reid.** Standing in the wood bison enclosure, Alan outlines the history of the wood bison enclosure managed by Skownan and its current and potential role as an economic enterprise for the community. He also describes the possibility of the domestic bison herd being included as part of an eco-tourism operation undertaken at Chitek Lake, and speaks about the protected areas initiative.
- **Community development with Harvey Nepinak.** Interviewed inside the Skownan band office, Harvey describes Skownan First Nation's history of involvement with the provincial government, highlighting the establishment of the bison enclosure and the opportunities that it provides. He also discusses small-scale logging as a beneficial alternative to Skownan's potential involvement in industrial logging on a contract basis. Harvey notes the importance of Chitek Lake to the people of Skownan and the need for economic development that is based on their traditional beliefs.

Monday, March 5th

- **Conservation with the grade one and two class at Skownan School.** The students in Skownan's split grade one and two class speak about the pictures they have drawn depicting what they think certain animals would say to them about protecting the environment. They then sing a song written by their teacher, Freda Sanderson, about Chitek Lake while she accompanies them on guitar.
- **Housing with Nelson Nepinak.** Interviewed in a forest on the reserve and in front of the band office, Nelson speaks about Skownan's housing needs and the potential of locally constructed ready-to-move homes to meet these needs. He shares his hope for the people of Skownan being able to cut timber from the lands surrounding their community and using their bandsaw and expertise as carpenters to build these homes.

Following completion of these sequences, the video team then returned to Winnipeg. Approximately nine hours of footage was recorded over the five days, which will be used to produce a rough cut of the second video in April.

8. Next Steps

During the next quarter, the project will be completed. To achieve this goal, the following activities need to be undertaken:

- **Completion of the second video.** Using footage primarily from the March video shoot, a rough cut of the project's second video will be completed. This initial version will be reviewed by the community to ensure that it accurately reflects the vision of the people of Skownan. Suggested modifications will be incorporated into the final version of the video, which will be presented at the focus group workshops.
- **Further engage the community in developing an action plan.** A final community workshop will be held in early April to refine the community action plan. Information from this session will be incorporated into the final action plan to be presented to participants in the focus group workshops.
- **Completion of the Focus Group workshops.** In preparation for the focus group meetings, the list of participants will be finalized, invitations developed and background material prepared and distributed. It is anticipated that the workshops will take place towards the end of April.
- **Evaluation and preparation of final report.** The IISD team will undertake an internal evaluation of the project to assess whether it has met its goals and to identify areas which could have been strengthened. A final report describing the concluding activities of the project, the outcomes of the focus group meetings and the results of the evaluation will be completed by the end of June.
- **Concluding celebration.** At the suggestion of the community and in keeping with the spirit of appreciative inquiry, a celebration to mark the conclusion of the project will be held in Skownan.