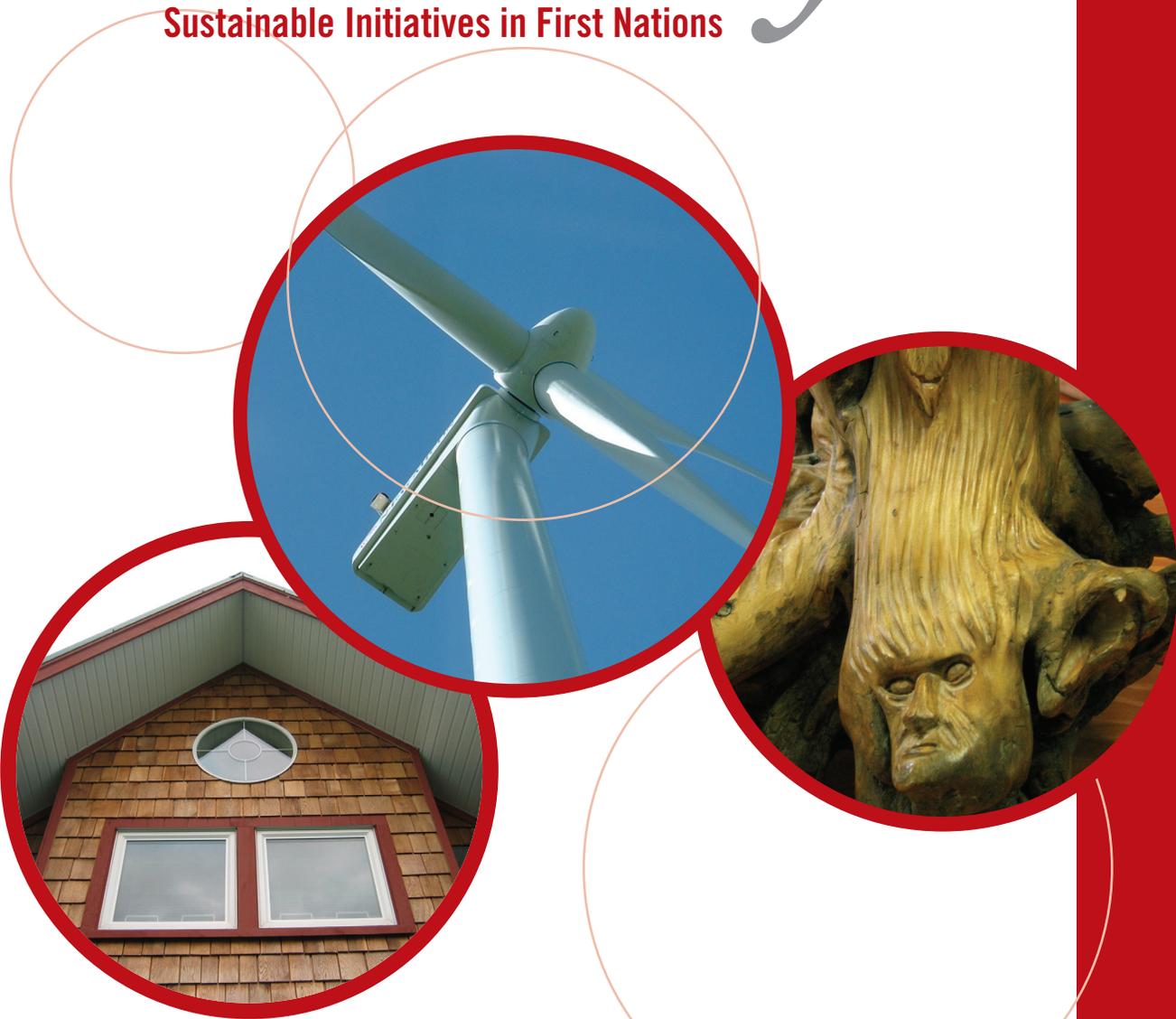


# *Sharing the* *story*

**Sustainable Initiatives in First Nations**



Indian and Northern  
Affairs Canada

Affaires indiennes  
et du Nord Canada

Canada



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Sharing the Story: Sustainable Initiatives in First Nations* was created to document successful projects developed in 15 First Nation communities across Canada. The overall objectives of this report are to:

- 1) Provide First Nations with examples of sustainable initiatives and the processes and conditions that resulted in (or hindered) their success;
- 2) Provide First Nations that have developed initiatives with an opportunity to share their experiences (positive/negative); and
- 3) Help Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and other organizations better meet the needs of First Nations when developing and implementing programs, policies, and processes.

*A sustainable initiative respects, acknowledges, and incorporates a community's culture, traditions, spiritual beliefs, and values, while promoting self-sufficiency, health, and healing for present and future generations.*

Communities and projects documented in this report are:

- Seabird Island First Nation (BC): Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project
- Osoyoos First Nation (BC): Inakmeep Vineyard, Nk'Mip Cellars, and Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre
- Piikuni First Nation (AB): Weather Dancer 1
- Kawakatoose First Nation (SK): TLE Land Management
- Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (MB): Historic Village
- Chemawawin Cree Nation (MB): Debris Timber Harvesting
- Wabigoon Lake First Nation (ON): Manomin Canadian Wild Rice
- Moose Deer Point First Nation (ON): Niigon Technology Ltd.
- Mohawks of The Bay of Quinte (ON): Healthy Housing Program
- Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg (QC): Awazibi Maple Syrup Production
- Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg (QC): Eagle Forest Land Management
- Nation Huron-Wendate (QC): Aliments TOKA Foods
- Eskasoni First Nation (NS): Unama'ki Institute Of Natural Resources
- Sheshatshiu and Innu Nation (Labrador): Ecosystem-Based Forest Management Plan
- Wha Ti Nation (NWT): Community Energy Plan

Each project selected and documented in this report contributes to the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the community. The information gathered from interviews of project coordinators, community members and leadership outlines many key elements that contributed to the success of the initiative. These elements include project planning, framework development, partnering, operation, and management.

A number of common criteria were identified among the projects:

- 1) Generating the idea or project concept;
- 2) The driving force that keeps the project on track and maintains momentum;
- 3) Partnerships and networks created to provide support and resources to the project and to the community;
- 4) Access to funding and financial resources; and
- 5) Community involvement and support of the project.

The sustainable initiatives in this report encountered a number of barriers and challenges including:

- 1) Lack of community and individual support;
- 2) Accessing funding and financial reporting requirements;
- 3) Economic development skills within the community;
- 4) Lack of expertise and capacity among community members;
- 5) Support for industry and product advancement;
- 6) Working within existing programs; and
- 7) Time and expense needed for new products and program development.

A number of questions are identified which government and other organisations can ask when considering the development of sustainable initiative projects in their region.

*Does this project contribute to the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the community?*

*What can I do to help develop the criteria to make this initiative a success?*

*What role can I play right now and what kind of role do I want to play in the future to promote the development of sustainable initiatives in First Nations?*

*How can I facilitate the development of sustainable initiatives in First Nations?*

Recommendations for INAC and other organizations to better meet the needs of First Nations when developing and implementing processes and policies include:

- Work with communities to understand what would best suit its members
- Ensure capacity building and transfer of knowledge and skills are incorporated into the project
- Consider the level of support by community members for the project
- Anticipate and plan for obstacles and barriers that may arise and delay the project
- Consider the level of involvement community members have in different aspects of the project

Each project documented for *Sharing the Story: Sustainable Initiatives in First Nations* provides an example of the type of projects being developed across Canada. The communities shared their stories and experience to enable others to learn from their processes, the challenges they faced and what they did to address them. Each community includes a message for other communities that is meant to inspire and provide insight into what it takes to develop a successful business.

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER), developed this report and project for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). CIER is a national First Nation-directed environmental non-profit organization. We offer research, advisory, and education and training services to Indigenous communities, governments and private companies in four interconnected topic areas: forests, climate change, water, and sustainability.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has frequently been asked by First Nation communities and other federal government departments to assist in sharing information about sustainable initiatives in First Nation communities. INAC is striving to raise awareness of these initiatives by documenting the conditions that make an initiative sustainable at the community level. In an effort to achieve this, INAC funded the Centre for Indigenous and Environmental Resources (CIER) to document and disseminate information about sustainable initiatives in First Nations.

The overall objectives of this project are to:

1. Provide First Nations with examples of sustainable initiatives AND the processes and conditions that resulted in (or hindered) the initiatives.
2. Provide First Nations that have initiatives with an opportunity to share their experiences (positive / negative)
3. Help INAC and other organizations better meet the needs of First Nations when developing and implementing policies, plans, and programs.



## 1.2. DEFINING A SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVE

The Sustainable Initiatives in First Nations project was developed to share stories about initiatives and ventures that are developing in First Nation communities across Canada. First Nations are among the fastest growing populations in Canada and are participating in business development by starting their own companies, or working and managing community-owned ventures. Each project, while created under unique circumstances and with a variety of available resources, contributes to the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the community. The initiatives are located in fifteen communities, from the West Coast of British Columbia and East Coast of Labrador, to the Northwest Territories, and represent the variety of businesses developed in communities today. Figure 1 shows where each community is located and Table 1 lists the projects that were visited and documented for this report.



Fig. 1: Communities visited for Sharing the Story: Sustainable Initiatives in First Nations report.

Table 1: Initiatives documented in *Sharing the Story: Sustainable Initiatives in First Nations*.

<b>Community (Location)</b>	<b>Project Name</b>
Seabird Island First Nation (British Columbia)	Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project
Osoyoos Indian Band (British Columbia)	Inkameep Vineyard, Nk'Mip Cellars, and Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre
Piikuni First Nation (Alberta)	Weather Dancer 1
Kawacatoose First Nation (Saskatchewan)	TLE Land Management
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (Manitoba)	Historic Village
Chemawawin Cree Nation (Manitoba)	Debris Timber Harvesting
Wabigoon Lake First Nation (Ontario)	Manomin Canadian Wild Rice Production
Moose Deer Point First Nation (Ontario)	Niigon Technology Ltd.
Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte (Ontario)	Healthy Housing
Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg (Quebec)	Awazibi Maple Syrup Production
Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg (Quebec)	Eagle Forest Land Management
Nation Huron-Wendate (Quebec)	Aliments TOKA Foods
Eskasoni First Nation (Nova Scotia)	Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources
Sheshatshiu Nation (Labrador)	Ecosystem-Based Forest Management Plan
Wha Ti Nation (Northwest Territories)	Community Energy Plan

## ***What is a Sustainable Initiative?***

To help understand and develop a definition of what should be considered a sustainable initiative for this project, an advisory committee was gathered during the Spring of 2004 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This committee consisted of members representing the “target audiences” for this report including First Nations, Government departments, and non-government organizations. They identified common criteria to define a sustainable initiative.

The committee also identified the type of information and the level of detail that would be useful for them, as members of the target audience.

The Advisory Committee recommended that the definition of a sustainable initiative include the following elements:

**Land**  
**Values**  
**Culture, Traditional Knowledge**  
**Education**  
**Health and Healing**  
**Self-sufficiency (employment)**  
**Future generations (long-term capacity needs to exist in the communities)**  
**Traditions**  
**Listening to the land**  
**Allowing for self-governance**  
**Role of technology**

Sustainability is:

*“Survival in modern world  
while maintaining  
traditions of the past”  
Chief Keyna Norwegian*

Sustainability requires:

*“Action within the  
community”  
Ona Scott-Big Bull*

The final definition agreed upon by the advisory committee is:

*A sustainable initiative respects, acknowledges, and incorporates a community’s culture, traditions, spiritual beliefs, and values, while promoting self-sufficiency, health, and healing for present and future generations.*

Three criteria were identified for selecting sustainable initiatives to be documented in this report from the over 60 possible projects presented to the Advisory Committee. Through discussions with the committee members it was decided that the projects should contribute to the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the community. Here is a brief description of what economic, environmental, and social sustainability mean.

### **Economic Sustainability**

Economic sustainability provides employment, financial security, and contributes to the local economy by building capacity, providing training and education opportunities. To be sustainable economically, the initiative would not require additional financial support and would be self-reliant and self-sufficient. The initiative looks towards the future and maintains the momentum to grow and succeed.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

By addressing environmental sustainability, the initiative considers the effects and impacts the business, product, or service has on the surrounding ecosystems, land, resources, and environment. The initiative protects, enhances, preserves, and utilizes these resources ensuring their sustainable use and preserving them for future generations. The initiative could also showcase and educate how the resources are used sustainably, how that benefits the community, and what it means to members of the community.

### **Social Sustainability**

Contributing to social sustainability is to provide programs and resources to help, heal, influence pride, and enhance the well being of community members. Projects developed in First Nations have the ability to influence the social, cultural, and health of community members by providing meaningful economic opportunities as well as build capacity and skills.

### 1.3. DOCUMENTING THE INITIATIVES

The objective for documenting initiatives in First Nation communities is to share information and experiences about starting projects. The intent is to identify common themes that made the projects successful. Project leaders, initiative developers, community members and their leadership, and partners shared their insights and experiences about the 15 initiatives selected by the Advisory Committee.

All communities were visited between July 2004 and January 2005 to document the factors that contributed to the project development. Interviews with project and community members included information about existing conditions and resources available in the community, steps taken to initiate the project, and the impact the initiative has had on the entire community.



Fig. 2: Wha Ti Nation, Northwest Territories

All communities and project representatives were enthusiastic to speak about their project and plans for the future. Each initiative coordinator or community leader provided a message to other communities interested in starting projects of the same variety, scale or level of complexity. These messages are highlighted in Section 2.4 Messages to Other Communities.

To showcase the initiatives documented for this report, a number of deliverables were outlined (or are under future consideration) including project profiles, a report document, a magazine, website and video.



Fig. 2: Sheshatshiu Innu Nation, Labrador

Reports were completed detailing the information shared by employees of the project, community leadership and members including Elders, youth, as well as partners involved. Each person provided insight into how the project was developed, their experience in the process, barriers and challenges encountered, and the impact in the community. Community profiles and project information is provided for

#### Target Audiences

First Nation  
Communities

Project Coordinators

Community Leaders

Community  
Members

Government  
Departments

Non-Government  
Organizations

each initiative at the back of this document (Sustainable Initiatives: Community Profiles and Project Information).

### **Sharing the Story Report and Nation to Nation**

Two publications were developed, including this *Sharing the Story* report, to showcase the sustainable initiatives, their processes, keys to success, and details outlining development of the initiative.

*Sharing the Story* identifies common criteria found among the initiatives documented. The common criteria identify elements essential in creating successful initiatives in First Nation communities. The information is drawn from the stories and experience shared by initiative participants. This report is aimed at an audience who wants detailed information, but also an understanding or summary of the issues drawn from all the initiatives. Government departments, community leadership, project developers, potential partners, industry and organizations may find the information contained in *Sharing the Story* useful when working with First Nations and sustainable business development.

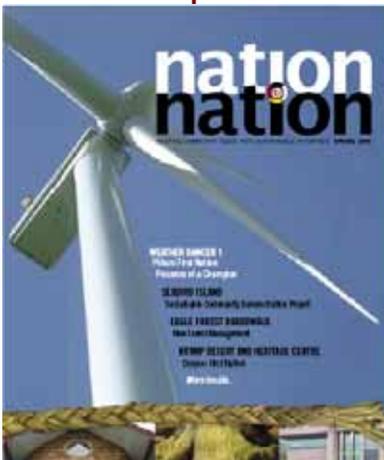


Fig. 4: Cover of the Nation to Nation Document

A shorter publication, the *Nation to Nation* document was also created using the information drawn from the interviews. The *Nation to Nation* document contains brief summaries for each initiative and provides basic facts about the projects. These facts include the keys points that contributed to the success of the project, its contribution to the social, environmental and economic sustainability of the community, and messages to other communities. The publication is geared toward a general audience wanting a quick reference about projects being developed by First Nations across Canada.

### **Website and Video**

The Advisory Committee for this project recommended two more components, which may be produced in the future. The committee wanted to address a wider audience with products that would have more appeal and the most impact (a video). They were also concerned about using the least amount of paper and having the ability to update the information provided (website and CD). These two components are under review pending financial considerations.

A video with footage from four or five of the initiatives was recommended to help document the community stories. It could serve as a resource highlighting the effects successful sustainable initiatives have in First Nation communities. This video would provide inspiration to coordinators and communities thinking about implementing their own initiatives. The production would show footage of the initiative (business, product or service), the community and its members, and interviews of the individuals involved in developing the project. The resulting resources would help promote sustainable initiatives and First Nation business development. This component would have the most impact with the images of the community and hearing the story directly from the people involved.

A website and accompanying CD would create a portal providing access to information about sustainable initiatives in First Nations. The website would include write-ups of the 15 initiatives, all documents produced (Nation to Nation document, Sharing the Story: Sustainable Initiatives in First Nations), and one page profiles of all the projects (over 60) presented to the Advisory Committee for consideration during the initiative selection process.

## 2. SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES IN FIRST NATIONS

Industry, communities and government have demonstrated increased interest in sustainable development over the past decade. As a result there is a need for information about what contributes to a sustainable project, and examples of initiatives that have been completed to date across the country.

*Sharing the Story: Sustainable Initiatives in First Nations* was developed to highlight initiatives developed in First Nation communities across Canada. By travelling to the communities and documenting the development process, we identified:

- a number of key criteria that helped each project succeed;
- five common criteria found in every project; and
- examples of challenges faced in their development, process, and/or operations.

Each community was also given the opportunity to share messages about their experience in developing the initiatives.

### 2.1. KEY ELEMENTS FOR EACH INITIATIVE

A number of key elements (drawn from interviews with project developers, coordinators, managers, employees, community members and leadership) were identified for each initiative. These elements contributed to the initiative by addressing key areas of development, including: project planning, framework development, partnering, and operation and management. By identifying key elements we were able to recognize common themes instrumental in making the businesses succeed. Table 2 lists two key elements for each project documented in this report.

Table 2: Key elements that contributed to the success of each initiative

Community	Key Elements
Seabird Island First Nation <i>Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project</i>	- Partnerships were created - Community involvement
Osoyoos Indian Band <i>Vineyard, Nk'Mip Cellars, and Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre</i>	- Dedicated community members - Partnerships were created
Piikuni First Nation <i>Weather Dancer 1</i>	- The presence of a champion - Partnerships were created
Kawacatoose First Nation <i>TLE Land Management</i>	- Leadership and community involvement - Dedicated staff
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation <i>Historic Village</i>	- Addressed a mandate of the community - Effective leadership
Chemawawin Cree Nation <i>Debris Timber Harvesting</i>	- Community leadership took the lead - Addressed a community need
Wabigoon First Nation <i>Manomin Canadian Wild Rice Production</i>	- Community involvement - Available resources in the area were used
Moose Deer Point First Nation <i>Niigon Technology Ltd.</i>	- Partnerships were created - Community involvement
Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte <i>Healthy Housing</i>	- Community leadership took the lead - Community support
Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg <i>Awazibi Maple Syrup Production</i>	- Dedicated project champions - Available resource in the area were used
Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg <i>Eagle Forest Land Management</i>	- Available resources in the area were used - Partnerships were created
Nation Huron-Wendate <i>Aliments TOKA Foods</i>	- Available resources were used - Created partnerships
Eskasoni First Nation <i>Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources</i>	- Partnerships were created with communities - Addressed local concerns
Sheshatshiu Nation <i>Ecosystem-Based Forest Management Plan</i>	- Addressed community concerns - Partnerships were created
Wha Ti Nation <i>Community Energy Plan</i>	- Partnerships were created - Community involvement

## **2.2. COMMON CRITERIA OF A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT**

The key elements (listed in Table 2) helped to identify a number of common criteria that contribute to the success of project development in First Nations. These criteria could be used by policy makers to help assess projects or to develop funding programs. The common criteria found among the project documented in *Sharing the Story* are:

- a strong project concept necessary for a successful project;
- a driving force keeping the project on track and maintaining momentum;
- partnerships and networks created to provide support and resources to the project and to the community;
- access to funding and financial resources; and
- community involvement and support for the project.

By addressing these five criteria, the initiatives were able to succeed when barriers and challenges were encountered. We will look at how each criteria contributes to the initiative's success and examples of how initiatives have incorporated these elements into their planning or project management.

### **Generating the Idea (Project Concept)**

Initiatives profiled in *Sharing the Story* have been successful due to the community, groups, and organizations interested in exploring the different project concepts brought forward. The most successful project ideas used resources found in the community and regions, built upon existing foundations and available skills, and created new capacity through training. Utilization of available resources highlights the importance of understanding and working with the pre-existing conditions found in the community.

Project ideas came from advisors, partners, and members from within or outside the community. Ideas could be developed to address specific issues, opportunities, or conditions found within the community. Identifying the project idea is a primary step in project development. It is an important component and can direct how successful a project could be.



Fig. 5: Businesses developed by OIBDC in Osoyoos, BC

For example Manomin Canadian Wild Rice, in Wabigoon Lake First Nation was developed when local community members realized the demand for wild rice in the market. The project identified a use for its local wild rice resources. Examples of projects developed by a community group include Nk'Mip Cellars and Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre, which are owned by Osoyoos Indian Band in Oliver, BC. The Osoyoos Indian Band created Osoyoos Indian Band Development Corporation (OIBDC) to develop and manage band owned businesses. This corporation was able to generate a number of project ideas and plan large-scale economic development within the community. A community that addressed local concerns was Wha Ti Nation and their community energy plan. The plan was developed to help reduce the need for diesel-generated electricity, which has impacted the health and activities of the community members.

### The Driving Force

#### (Key Players, Champions, Community Mandates)

Each project has a driving force that initiates planning, develops the ideas, and pushes the project forward. This force helps to keep momentum going, finds solutions, and solves problems that arise. The driving force could be an individual, a group of people with a special interest or perhaps community leadership or departments. The dedication of this force (the individual, department, group) provides the foundation to tackle any issue encountered. Community members observed that this force or person in their project often had a “Can Do” attitude and positive role in the development process and management.

According to the interviews individual coordinators tend to carry the heavy workload of project development on their shoulders. The person often puts in extra time and expense to keep the project running smoothly, whereas community and group-run projects rely on group work and decision making processes. Involvement of all the members in the process is important resulting in workload being spread out among many people, reducing the load placed on an individual. Many projects developed by groups use a mandate to maintain focus and to help ensure the project addresses the issues important to the community.

William Big Bull, a Piikuni First Nation member, took the lead role and was project champion for Weather Dancer 1, a wind turbine project. Big Bull ensured that the project idea did not die by spending his own time and money to keep the idea going even after the community sold the project to developers who completed and built the turbines on Cowley Ridge near Pincher Creek, Alberta. An example of where community leadership took the lead in developing the

project is Chemawawin Cree Nation's Debris Timber Harvesting program. Chemawawin Cree Nation ensured their commercial fishermen had employment when commercial fishing was closed on Cedar Lake in Manitoba. A project that was developed as a personal business venture is Aliments TOKA Foods. Owner, Henri Picard, developed, marketed, and financed the project himself.



Fig. 6: Henri Picard displays Aliments TOKA Foods at an international show.

### Partnerships and Networking

Another important factor contributing to the success of initiatives in First Nations is the creation of partnerships and network connections between the project, community, and industry. Many communities do not have all the necessary resources to develop, implement, and operate initiatives by themselves. This is the same for most new ventures started in any city, town or region. Many programs have been developed to help people develop their project concept and business plan, find financial resources, work through legal aspects, etc. The creation of partnerships (formal or informal) has provided First Nations with the financial, human, technical or information resources and expertise they need to manage a successful project.



Fig. 7: Entrance to the Eagle Forest.

For example, Seabird Island First Nation developed their Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project in partnership with Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The groups worked together, and with many other partners, to implement a successful project, which would not have been successful without the expertise, and resources that were provided by the various partners. To create a new business and production facility, Niigon

Technologies Ltd., Moose Deer Point First Nation partnered with Husky Injection Molding Ltd. The partnership provided the necessary training, production support and planning to successfully launch the new production facility. Partnerships were also used to manage operations such as the Eagle Forest Project. The Eagle Forest Corporation's Board of Directors is made up of representatives from local organizations, including Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg, which has an interest in the forest resources of the Maniwaki region in Quebec. The Board of Directors help direct how the resources should be managed so all stakeholders are considered and included in the process.

### Funding and Financial Resources

Funding is a critical aspect of business development. Funds are required to produce the business plans that outline project concepts, implementation plans, financial sources, plans for growth, and marketing. Financial resources are also needed to complete studies, pay for construction or operating costs, training and education. Many Federal and Provincial government departments provide funding programs for project development. Programs run by Aboriginal Business Canada and CANDO are other sources of funds for project development.

Many of the *Sharing the Story* initiatives accessed human resources and expertise from outside the community. These human resources helped acquire the funds needed to start the projects. Economic development officers, in some communities also put together proposals and applications for grants to access financial resources, and report on how the funds were dispersed.



Fig. 8: "Granny Flat" built by the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte Healthy Housing Program.

Brokenhead Ojibway Nation has an Economic Development Officer who helps the Historic Village expand their activities and create new project ideas for the interpretive grounds by accessing funding sources. New and creative funding options were developed by Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte to provide financial assistance for their Healthy Housing program. Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg was able to access the talents of local university business students to put together the business plan for their local "sugar bush". The community was then able to plan and construct the Awazibi Maple Syrup production facility.

## Community Involvement

A fifth success factor in Sustainable Initiatives in First Nations is community involvement. This is essential if the project is to contribute to the social sustainability of the community. The level of community involvement could include participation in project development, planning, execution or operation.

Participation of community members helps to provide emotional, physical, and financial support as well as person-hours and patronage. Participation during the development stages of a project helps to build trust among different groups and stakeholders in the community. All of the initiatives profiled in this report had support or input from community members. Without this support many of the project would not have gotten off the ground.



Fig. 9: Innu Nation Forest Office surveys area covered by the Forest Management Plan

Examples of community support include Kawacatoose First Nation which created a Treat Lands Entitlement (TLE) Trust Committee, consisting of representatives of on and off reserve members. The committee outlines which properties to acquire and articulates the future plans for the TLE program and newly acquired properties. Another initiative with strong community involvement is the Unama'ki Natural Resources Institute. Their Board of Directors consists of not only community members, but has an Elders' advisory committee, and representatives from all five Cape Breton Island First Nations that share the resources being studied and managed by the institute. This arrangement ensures that all members have input into the direction and planning for the community used resources. Sheshatshiu Nation and the Innu Nation office address issues that affect the resources used by the local people as well. Their Ecosystem-based Forest Management Plan including programs, studies, and training (for the Guardian program). This training includes teachings and knowledge of community elders as well as scientific training.

## 2.3. BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

New ventures always present new and unforeseen challenges. The communities in this report developed successful sustainable initiatives. In the process, they also faced a number of common and unique barriers and obstacles, which were often overcome with creative solutions.

Some of the barriers and obstacles that were identified by project participants and identified from the interviews include: community support; access to funding and financial reporting; economic development skills; specialized expertise; planning and access to background data; harmonization with partners; and, environmental concerns. There are a number of examples of how the communities addressed these barriers and obstacles.

### Lack of Community and Individual Support

According to Owna Big Bull, supporter of Weather Dancer 1, there are three types of people in the community.

- 1- Those who support the project fully,
- 2- Those who will “wait and see” and watch the progress, and
- 3- Those who are opposed to the project.

To incorporate all three types of community members, the project champions must listen to the issues and concerns raised by those who are opposed to the project. By addressing the issues the project will be more reflective of the needs and ideas of the community members.



Fig. 10: Water towers included in the development of Niigon Technologies Ltd.

For example, Piikuni’s champion William Big Bull persevered through several changes of Chief and Council until the support was there for the Weather Dancer Wind Turbine project to be completed. Previous community leadership had sold the first wind turbine project years before. In the Moose Deer Point First Nation community, a referendum vote was held when opposition arose to the Niigon Technologies Ltd. project. A vote was held and community members were 90% in favour of the project. To address the concerns raised by the members who opposed the project, it was decided by Niigon to truck water so the facility would not impact that community’s limited water supply. In this case, those that opposed the project helped to make the project more environmentally sustainable for the community and business.

## Funding – Accessing and Reporting

Funding initiatives are often short-term or have application deadlines that are difficult for busy First Nations personnel to meet. Chief Tina Laveque of Brokenhead Ojibway Nation commented that when communities are ready to access specific funding programs, the programs are over, or their applications fall outside of the deadlines. For some communities, partnering with existing businesses, non-government organisations, or government branches helps to provide the assistance needed for proposal writing and fulfilling reporting requirements.

Many projects access multiple funding sources. Wha Ti Nation needed to access many financial sources to complete the research for the Wha Ti Community Energy Plan. Extra time and expenses were needed to fulfill the financial reporting requirements. Each funding source required its own report, in a specific format, and with no consistency between the reporting requirements.

## Economic Development Skills – Marketing and Product Development

Many First Nations face the challenge of finding people within the community with economic development skills and interests. Communities need economic development officers to oversee project expansion, develop marketing plans and entrepreneurs to take over additional product development. Value-added businesses is untapped market and opportunities in many communities. The value-added process uses a resource produced to by one company to create a new product (such as maple syrup being produced into maple butter or candy).



Fig. 11: Nk'Mip Cellars production facility and winery in Osoyoos, BC.

Inkameep Vineyards and Nk'Mip Cellars relied on the expertise and skills of their partners and managers to start the production facilities and train community members about the product and industry. Manomin Canadian Wild Rice does not have the human resources available to attend all the marketing events (food shows and fairs) to promote their product. The company depends on their website for orders and sales. The development of new products made from wild rice, is being handed over to Wabigoon First Nation's new Economic Development Office.

## Capacity and Expertise Within the Community

Communities face the challenge of lack of expertise (or capacity) and sometimes dedication in both the technically trained and labour work forces. Communities and project developers address this issue in a variety of ways. For example Osoyoos Indian Band provided training in grape horticulture to the manager of their vineyard. The community member then was able to take over management of Inkameep Vineyards Ltd. Eagle Forest Corporation had to hire forestry professional from all regions of Quebec and Canada to provide the expertise needed to run and operate the project. The Innu Nation has their own trained forestry professionals, including Forest Guardians, for their Ecosystem-based Forest Management Plan. Seabird Island First Nation was able to incorporate house construction training for their community members into their Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project.



Fig. 12: Forest Guardian, Innu Nation Forest Office, Sheshatshiu, Labrador.

## Industry and Product Support

Henri Picard, owner of Aliments TOKA Foods, mentions that for his product to succeed in the local market, there is a need for government support to promote his type of product (aboriginal inspired foods) in the industry. For his business to compete in Canada he would like to see a distribution centre that focuses on Aboriginal Foods, a section of the supermarket shelves dedicated to indigenous products, and support to tap into the mainstream markets of all Canadians. Manomin Canadian Wild Rice is also facing similar issues. Their organic community cooperative product is trying to compete with farmed wild rice operations that have lower operating and processing costs. The only option for Manomin Wild Rice is to diversify by making new products from their wild rice.

## Existing Programs

Departments and programs that exist in the community and are run by the First Nation's Administration developed many of the initiatives documented in this report. These programs have existing regulation, processes, and requirements



Fig. 13: Seabird Island First Nation's Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project.

that need to be met while developing the new initiative. Seabird Island First Nation's Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project (right) was coordinated through the existing Capital Housing program. The project had a fixed budget to work with. The Mohawk's Healthy Housing program is also run through the community's housing department, but the department changed the way their funds are accessed and allocated to meet the needs of their new program, and found the additional financial resources needed to make the program a success.

### Time and Expense

The development of many of these sustainable initiatives in First Nation communities brings new skills and experience for the people involved. Building capacity within the community, among the staff, and for the project coordinators requires additional expenditure and time. Many of the projects documented in this report required more funds and time than anticipated.

Seabird Island's project ran into delays, which pushed the construction of their housing units behind schedule. The use of new products in the housing units required additional time to experiment with combining the materials into the construction. Training of their community construction crew in the new technologies also added to the delay. To market Aliments TOKA Foods, Henri Picard travels to international food shows which costs thousands of dollars. To offset this cost, Picard partners with other food production companies to share the expense to market their products internationally.

Barriers and challenges are encountered in any project being developed. Each person learns from these experiences and plans for them in future endeavours. This report lists just seven issues faced in the initiatives. Ultimately the success of the initiative depends on the creative thinking and dedication of the people involved to ensure all the issues are addressed and rectified. This ensures that the projects develop and operate successfully and contribute to the environmental, economic, and social sustainability of the community.

## 2.4. MESSAGES TO OTHER COMMUNITIES

Each community was asked to provide a message to other communities and individuals who might contemplate taking on a project of similar variety, scale or complexity. The messages are a chance for the community leadership, project coordinators, managers and employees to pass on their knowledge for others to learn from. While many of the messages cover general topics or seem simple, they illustrate the impact small gestures and actions have on the overall success of the project.

### **Seabird Island First Nation (British Columbia) – Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project**

“Take each project as a learning opportunity, but make sure all bases are covered in the process, and that the roles participants and partners will be playing are defined,” indicated Wendy Phair, Capital Housing Manager for Seabird Island First Nation. Lyle and Grace Bob (right) are owners of one of the new units built under the Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project.



Fig. 14: Lyle and Grace Bob, members of Seabird Island First Nation.

### **Osoyoos Indian Band (British Columbia) – Inkameep Vineyards, Nk’Mip Cellars, and Nk’Mip Desert and Heritage Centre**

“Treat the business as a business. Make the decisions that need to be made. Community owned businesses tend to be over staffed, due to the social responsibility of the leadership, but that does not mean it cannot be profitable at the same time,” suggested Chief Clarence Louie the Chief of Osoyoos Indian Band.



Fig. 115: William Big Bull, project champion, Weather Dancer.

### **Piikuni First Nation (Alberta) – Weather Dancer 1**

“It is important that all requirements, permits and studies have been taken care of, milestones are set and worked on, and a critical path identified and followed. The project team needs to know how it all works and current trends in the industry and technology fields. There is a lot of hard work to be done, which requires time, energy and patience to complete,” stated William Big Bull, Energy Manager, Piikuni Utility Corporation.



Fig. 16: Vern Worm, TLE Office, Kawacatoose First Nation

### **Kawacatoose First Nation (Saskatchewan) – Land Management and Land Use Policy**

“Understanding the process and experience of other communities enables the Treaty Land Entitlement Office to learn from what has been tried, been successful, as well as what has not worked. Communicating with other communities who have experience in the transfer process of converting land parcels to reserve status is helpful,” stated Geraldine Worn, Manager of the Treaty Land Entitlement Office, Kawacatoose First Nation.

### **Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (Manitoba) – Historic Village**

Historic Village Manager, Carl Smith said, “It is important to deliver the information in a very straightforward manner and be honest about what you are doing. It is important to have the support of the Elders, community leadership and everybody who is connected to the project. Start with what you can handle and have a good business plan that is doable.”

### **Chemawawin Cree Nation (Manitoba) – Debris Timber Harvesting**

Robert Walker, Program Coordinator of the Debris Timber Harvesting initiative counsels others to involve the community in the process: “Train the (local) people, use those you have trained and use the proper equipment.” He also highlights the importance of listening to concerns and recommendations for better ways of doing the job, to help ensure that safety of community members and workers is a top priority. Recognition is also essential: “It is important that when workers do a good job, that they are recognized for their work.”

### **Wabigoon Lake First Nation (Ontario) – Canadian Wild Rice**

Richard McIvor, General Manager of Canadian Wild Rice, had this to say about the business: “You have to have the community behind you. They all need to know what we are doing. They all need input. You have to constantly monitor your product for consistent quality.”



Fig. 17: Richard McIvor explaining the production process.

**Moose Deer Point First Nation (Ontario) – Niigon Technologies Ltd.**

Rhonda King, member of Council, Moose Deer Point First Nation had the following advice: “Plan and look at all your options. Ensure community involvement and get endorsement throughout the project. Have community meetings, and send out advisories in the community newsletter. Look for money and resources for your project. Separation of business and politics is key.”



Fig. 18: Chief Donald Maracle, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte.

**Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte (Ontario) – Healthy Housing Program**

Chief Donald Maracle said: “Public education is key in getting community support and word of mouth is important for getting information out. Addressing social issues is key to having a successful mortgage program.”

Chris Maracle, Director of Housing at the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, says, “Do your research, and be practical, as you have limited resources. Keep the work in the community, and invest in training. You need both the political support and the community support, because if the community doesn’t believe in it, it won’t happen.”

**Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg (Quebec) – Eagle Forest Project, Awazibi Maple Syrup Production**

“Planning, marketing, community support and involvement are key in getting your initiative off the ground,” says Frank Meness, a councillor of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg Council.

**Nation Huron-Wendate (Quebec) – Aliments TOKA Foods**

Henri Picard, owner of Aliments TOKA Foods states that “Communities and companies need to work together to advance the Aboriginal foods industry. Combining resources of all the small businesses will help build long-term relationships with communities, harvesters and customers. By working together, and building capacity, supporting and developing new businesses will be easier.”

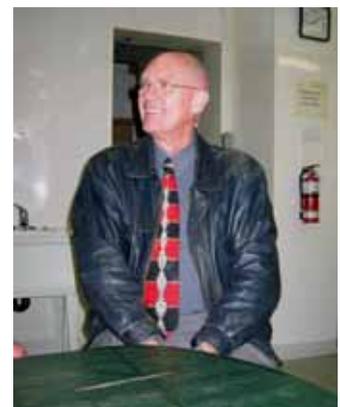


Fig. 19: Henri Picard, owner of Aliments TOKA Foods.

### **Eskasoni First Nation (Nova Scotia) – Unama’ki Institute of Natural Resources**

Albert Marshall, member of Eskasoni Elder’s committee suggests: “Make a road that takes from both the scientific and traditional. Seeing the world from these two perspectives will help expand horizons.” He also recommends: “Looking toward the community and the issues they are facing for guidance.”

### **Sheshatshiu Nation (Labrador) – Forest Process Agreement: Ecosystem-based Forest Management Plan**

Valerie Courtois, Forest Technician, Innu Nation Forest Office advises communities to “Decide what the needs are for the community, and use all available resources to provide solutions. It is important to get the word out about the work being accomplished.” She tells people to “raise your voice and don’t be afraid to ask for what you want.” “If you accept what is given to you, that is all you will get.”



Fig. 20: Members of Innu Nation’s Forest Office.

### **Wha Ti Nation (Northwest Territories) – Community Energy Plan**



Fig. 21: Elders and youth involved in Wha Ti’s Community Energy Plan.

Bob Bromley from Ecology North and Sonny Zoe, Wha Ti Community coordinator indicate that “Starting with a healthy community, pushing on even when support is low, and thinking about the children’s future is important.” “Wha Ti Nation will be able to provide support to their neighbouring communities, which is part of their way of life.”

### **3. PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES: RECOMMENDATIONS**

One objective of this report was to help INAC and other organizations better meet the needs of First Nations when developing or implementing programs, policies, and processes. While the *Sharing the Story* report provides an overview of the common criteria and key components that have led to the success of initiatives in First Nation communities, it also highlights many of the barriers and obstacles that were faced.

The development of specific recommendations for the development of successful sustainable initiatives for all First Nation communities is difficult. Each community has a varying degree of capacity, resources, desire and networking capabilities. What has worked for one community will not necessarily work for another.

However, a number of common criteria have been identified across the board as important elements for the development of a sustainable initiative. A number of questions and actions can be derived from these insights. These questions can be applied to: the generation of the project idea; the driving force (key player, champions, community mandates); partnerships and networking; funding and financial resources; and community involvement in the process.

#### **Questions to Ask Yourself**

Does this project contribute to the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the community as defined in this report?

Does this project include the criteria identified in this report?

What can I do to help develop the criteria to make this initiative a success?

What role can I play right now and what kind of role do I want to play in the future to promote the development of sustainable initiative in First Nations?

How can I facilitate the development of sustainable initiatives in First Nations?

## Generation of the Project Idea

The idea and concepts for many of the initiatives in this report were developed by sources outside of the First Nation communities. While the idea may not originate from within the community, the project can still contribute to the First Nation and impact economic, environmental and social sustainability. The idea must incorporate and work with the community, their abilities and mandates. To contribute to community sustainability the project has to give back to the First Nation.

**ACTION:** When reviewing, proposing or developing ideas that would include First Nations and their community members, it is important to work with the community from the beginning to understand what would best suit its members.

**ACTION:** Capacity building and the transfer of knowledge and skills should be incorporated into any project developed with First Nations. These are important part of working toward community sustainability.

## Identifying and Supporting the Driving Force

The identification of the driving force (person, group or department) is important when developing or reviewing projects that will contribute to First Nation communities. The driving force is the element that will keep momentum going when issues, problems, or difficult decisions have to be made. The driving force needs to have the energy, capacity, and willingness needed to take the project concept and make it a reality.

While many of the projects documented in this report have individual people spearheading the initiative, including the research, development and/or implementation aspects, there are many people who supported their efforts. These supporters provided emotional support, knowledge, expertise, and resources to the champion or key person heading the project.

**ACTION:** When planning or reviewing initiatives, the level of support within the community should be considered a key element. Consider what can be done to incorporate greater community involvement in the project.

**ACTION:** Planning should also incorporate contingency plans if one or more of the support structures, staff members or resources is altered or changed during the development and implementation process.

### **Creating or Fostering Partnerships and Networking Abilities**

Every business developed (First Nation or Non-First Nation) requires help in one or more areas to get started. The creation of partnerships and networking is key to project development. Partnerships help to provide resources (human, information, or financial) needed to plan and implement a sustainable initiative. Creating partnerships can be a difficult task, especially for individuals, groups or departments tackling a new initiative. There might be situations in which communities have great project ideas, but require help identifying possible partners or networks to get their project from an idea to a reality.

**ACTION:** Help generate the partnerships that are required for the development of a project that will benefit the sustainability of the community economically, environmentally, and socially by providing network contacts, background or research information or support for creating necessary partnerships.

### **Providing Funding and Financial Resources**

An understanding is needed of the issues that could impact and possibly delay project planning, review, and/or implementation in First Nation communities. This could include: changes in leadership; change in staff; time for training; etc. Flexibility within financial programs would greatly impact the ability of First Nations to plan and start projects in their communities.

Funding programs should consider the information they require in conjunction with the other resources that the initiatives will need to access. Are the programs compatible? Do they require the same or different kinds of reporting, proposals, or applications? How are programs advertised, when are the deadlines, and how are funds dispersed? How long will the program be in effect and how will communities know what will be coming next?

**ACTION:** Government and lending agencies should work together with First Nations to ensure coordination of programs across government departments

and develop program objectives and reporting requirements that meet the needs of the First Nations and departments.

### **Community Involvement in the Process**

Community involvement in project planning or implementation is essential if the project is to contribute to the First Nation. This involvement can range from information sessions to reading about the initiative in a newsletter, or being involved in the development process. Community members can be involved by being patrons, employees, supporters, or suppliers.

**ACTION:** When reviewing applications and proposals or developing a project plan, consider how the community members are involved in the process. Involvement can provide support, a sense of ownership and pride in what is being developed. If the project addresses needs of the community, it will impact their lives in a meaningful way.

### **Contributing to Community Sustainability**

There are many projects that are developed by and for First Nations across Canada. This report looked specifically at projects that are sustainable and contribute to the community. The reasoning behind documenting sustainable initiatives is to show how projects and businesses can impact community strength beyond economics.

**ACTION:** By taking many of these recommendations and actions into consideration during the planning, review, or implementation of initiatives in First Nation communities or by First Nation individuals or groups, there is a better chance to impact the community in a more holistic manner.

## 4. CONCLUSION

There are a number of insights that have been generated by documenting sustainable initiatives in First Nations. Each project, born out of a variety of unique circumstances and with access to different resources contributes to the social, environmental and economic sustainability of the community.

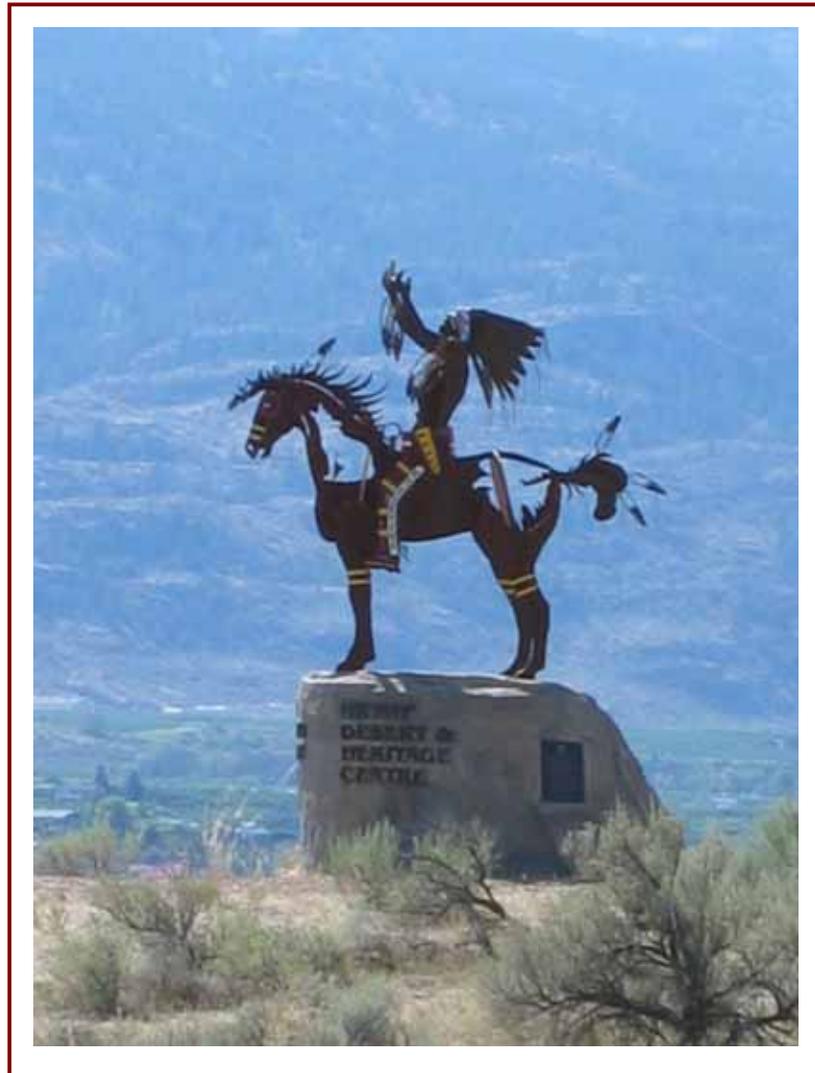
Each project respects, acknowledges, and incorporates a community's culture, traditions, spiritual beliefs, and values, while promoting self-sufficiency, health, and healing for present and future generations. By listening to the stories and experiences of the community members, leadership, elders, youth and project coordinators, an understanding of the time, dedication, resources, and commitment required to develop and operate a successful project is brought forward. These stories are provided in Sustainable Initiatives: Community Profiles and Project Information found at the back of this document.

The common themes identified by the initiatives themselves indicate the importance of generating the idea and of having a driving force to keep the momentum going. We learn about the role networking and partnerships play. Funding and financial resources play a critical role in the development of a project. Community involvement can also have an impact in the success of the initiative.

Through the stories and experiences shared by the communities, we learn that the road is not always straight and that barriers and challenges will be encountered and overcome. We are also provided with examples of how individuals and communities have addressed issues such as the lack of community support, working within the time constraints of application and proposals, finding the people with the skills and experience needed to manage or operate the businesses.

INAC and other organizations can provide support for sustainable initiatives by working with the communities, aiding capacity building, transfer of knowledge and skills, and plan for obstacles and challenges that could arise. By working together the projects will be able to meet the needs unique to each community.

**SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES:  
COMMUNITY PROFILES AND PROJECT  
INFORMATION**



**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES DEMONSTRATION PROJECT**

*"I like to think that we are doing it on behalf of all our people."*

Elder Clem Seymour

Seabird Island First Nation is located one-hour East of Vancouver, British Columbia.

Members of the community, administration and council have used innovative plans to meet the needs of the Seabird Island people.



**Getting Started  
New On Reserve Housing Approach**

In early 2001, Seabird Island Housing Department held discussions with community members and tenants to discuss housing conditions in the community. Topics raised by participants included building quality, increasing utility costs, and the quick deterioration of houses. Through these meetings, 30 recommendations were outlined and defined.

The Seabird Island First Nation developed a five-year housing plan, New On Reserve Housing Approach (NORHA), to address the recommendations outlined by the community and plan for the future demands on the housing program. The goal was to demonstrate a plan that would bring overall and sustained improved housing to the community to meet the needs of their growing and aging population.

**Partnerships**

After NORHA, Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) approached Seabird Island First Nation to develop a demonstration project highlighting sustainable planning and housing design concepts. With the help of CMHC and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) the Sustainable Community Demonstration Project was developed. While the Seabird Island First Nation provided the requirements for the project (based on NORHA), CMHC provided technical services and expertise to start the Capital project, which included covering the cost of the planning and design consultants. INAC provided information on funding opportunities for training and related services.

Sponsors donated materials and products to the project, and provided training and installation services.

**Quick facts**

Member of Sto:lo Nation

On-reserve Population: 503  
Total Population: 749  
Reserve Area: 2,140.8 ha

Service Centre:  
Hope

Closest City Centre:  
Vancouver

Project Type:  
Housing Development

Operators:  
Capital Housing,  
Seabird Island First Nation

Partnerships:  
Seabird Island First Nation,  
Canadian Mortgage and  
Housing Corporation (CMHC),  
and  
Department of Indian and  
Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

Seabird Island First Nation appointed a Building Committee for the project, "Voice of the Community". Committee members included a council member, construction manager, band manager, marketing individual, and capacity builder (events coordinator). The team provided feedback to the consultants, designers and partners, and relayed information to community members. The project proceeded under a "self-construction" model with training provided to community members. Broadway Architects, hired by CMHC, met with the community to outline needs and objectives for the residences.

**Funding**

The funding for six of the seven units was provided under the resources available for the Section 95 Housing Program run by the community. The seventh demonstration unit was built using donations from partners and sponsors. The goal was to produce the units at a cost of \$75/sq.ft. The actual cost of the demonstration unit was \$95/sq.ft. for a single story slab on grade house and \$120/sq.ft. for the two story finished dwellings.

**Land Planning**

Seabird Island First Nation has a Land Plan outlining existing residential development and areas proposed for future use. The cluster of units included one single-family building, a fourplex (townhouse), and a duplex. The 7-unit project was built on an area designated for 4 units.

**Expectations**

The project provided an alternative building option to the community while reducing the energy bills paid by residents. There was a need for flexible housing for community members including units for elders, extended families, and a variety of income levels.

## **Expertise**

The demonstration unit was used to train community workers, and their new skills were applied to the remaining 6 units. Seabird Island First Nation's construction manager, Dwayne McNeil, was engaged for the project.

Building and site plans were developed by Broadway Architects, from Vancouver BC.

## **Obstacles / Barriers**

The "self-construction" method, used for the project, required extra time and expense. The training of community members increased the length of the project and resulted in delays.

The project dealt with new technologies, products, materials, and construction techniques making it difficult for the contractors to bid on it. The learning curve for the products and application was steep. The systems, products, and services were supplied or donated in pieces and some experimentation was required to combine new materials together.

## **Current realities**

The project was developed using donated materials and services making it difficult to calculate the true costs of the project. According to Wendy Phair, Capital Housing Manager, the community would not have the financial resources to hire architects and community planners for their projects.

The community has a new perspective on how it can meet housing needs.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contribution**

### **Community Culture and Traditions**

The Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project incorporates community traditions and culture. A Spiritual Healing Garden creates a cultural focal point and is to be used by community members, and residents and will involve the local school. Recycled cedar hydro poles were carved (by local community members) and placed in the Garden. Cultural symbols were included in the units as well.

### **Community Healing It is about sharing**

The units were developed as flexible housing in which multiple generations or extended family members could reside. The units contain features for people with limited mobility. Clem Seymour, Elder and Councillor, indicates that this project is where "culture and traditions meet technology to look after the people".

## **Self-sufficiency**

The new ideas and technologies demonstrated in the project have been applied to existing houses in the community. The training of labour, construction and maintenance crews ensured community members could maintain the systems without relying on non-community resources.

## **Environment**

The site design and plan utilizes existing site characteristics and features. Old growth yellow cedar hydro poles, a recycled material, were used to add character and reduce material costs. Local river rock was used for sidewalks. Other design components were included to reduce material costs, energy consumption, and water usage. The use of environmental features and processes, to naturally heat and cool air, reduces the dependence on electricity and fuel usage.

## **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

Community members enjoyed seeing the buildings being completed. Elder Clem Seymour indicates, "The people have to sit down and really understand how to bring the technologies and information home to use. There are questions on how to get the school involved, how to bring it all back to the community by building capacity, and future application for the newly learned skills. These things are important in the long run and it starts to educate the people of what is available".

The project has been successful since it addressed the concerns raised by community members and worked to find solutions. The units and planning contained cultural elements and symbols that reflected the values of the people and are unique to any other development that has occurred in the industry.

Contact Information:  
Wendy Phair, Capital Housing  
Seabird Island First Nation  
(604) 796-6818

**INKAMEEP VINEYARDS LTD., NK'MIP CELLARS, AND NK'MIP DESERT AND HERITAGE CENTRE**

The Osoyoos Indian Band (OIB) is located in the South Okanagan of the British Columbia Interior, 30 minutes south of Penticton.

The Osoyoos Indian Band Development Corporation (OIBDC) manages economic development within the community. Osoyoos has three projects that are documented in this report.

**INKAMEEP VINEYARDS LTD.**

The Inkameep Vineyards is 100% Aboriginal owned. The 98.3 hectares (243-acre) vineyard is located in Oliver, BC. Inkameep Vineyard was established in 1968 and is one of the largest privately owned vineyards in B.C.

**Getting Started**

When Inkameep Vineyard first started an outside operations manager was hired. In 1987, Sam Baptiste, a community member who has worked at the vineyard since 1968, was approached to train in preparation of assuming the role of manager in 1990.

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

There are a number of community members who have been with the Inkameep Vineyards since its beginning. Out of the 40 positions available in production over 70% are occupied by community members.

A management team runs the vineyard and the OIBDC oversees their work. Business decisions are based on what 'needs to be done' to maintain a successful and profitable vineyard.

**Funding**

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provided funding to start Inkameep Vineyards. Due to mismanagement, the Inkameep Vineyards was not profitable in the beginning. A change in management (in 1990) turned the financial crisis around and the vineyard became self-sustaining. The business's operational costs are approximately \$1.0 million.



**Quick facts**

On-reserve Population: 288  
 Total Population: 421  
 Reserve Area: 13,000 ha

Service Centre:  
 Penticton

Closest City Centre:  
 Kamloops

Project Type:  
 Viticulture (vineyard),  
 Wine making and distribution,  
 Interpretive Centre

Owners:  
 Osoyoos Indian Band Development Corporation

**Business Plan**

Inkameep Vineyard has a ten-year business plan covering the existing contracts for grapes, expected changes to a variety of grapes grown, and expansion and re-evaluation of existing crops.

**Land Planning**

Land Planning is very important in the development of a vineyard. Grape vines require specific soil and environmental conditions to produce high quality fruit. Small variances in land and environmental conditions can render an area unsuitable for growing grapes.

**Obstacles / Barriers**

Grape growing as an industry is dependent on environmental and weather conditions. The business is a 7-day a week job for 6 months.

Large commercial vineyards and wineries affect small privately owned businesses. Sam Baptiste has been able to stay competitive by providing a high quality product allowing him to demand a higher price for his grapes.

**Expertise**

Mr. Baptiste has a two-year Horticulture Associate Degree from Washington State University. He researches to stay abreast of current and future trends in

the industry.

Inkameep Vineyards has 40 positions that include mechanics, equipment operators, field supervisors, labourers, irrigation system workers, bookkeeper, assistant, and general manager.

**NK'MIP CELLARS**

Nk'Mip Cellars (est. 2002) is a First Nation owned and operated winery. The 18,000 square foot (1672 square meters) winery has the capacity to produce 18,000 cases or 162,000 litres of wine. The Cellars produces many different wines made with grapes from Inkameep Vineyards.

## Partnerships

OIB partnered with Vincor International Inc., Canada's largest commercial winemaker, who had the experience, strategies and connections necessary to market and distribute the new product. OIB owns 51% of Nk'Mip Cellars, while Vincor has the remaining 49%. Vincor manages the operations at Nk'Mip Cellars.

## Funding

The funding to start the operation (\$4 million dollars), build the production facilities, develop the wine products, and produce the wine for distribution, came from government programs and two shareholders.

Current projected revenue for the Cellars is \$1.3 million with production, marketing and overhead costs of \$1.5 million. It is projected that the Cellars will make net profit starting in 2008.

## Business Planning

An aggressive marketing plan was used to launch the new product label. The plan also utilizes the Cellar building as a 'destination experience', treating visitors to a unique atmosphere with a patio overlooking the lake, and features works by local artists.

## Expectations

The Nk'Mip Cellars has set high standards for their wine. In 2000, its first production year, Nk'Mip Cellars produced 3,200 cases. With 4,700 cases produced in 2001, the winery is expecting to reach 15,000 cases by 2005. This goal will bring Nk'Mip Cellars close to their maximum production capacity of 18,000 cases or 162,000 litres of wine.

## Requirements

The Nk'Mip Cellars wines carry a Vintners Quality Alliance (VQA) seal, a wine certification and marketing strategy program in British Columbia that mandates standards and certification for wines.

## Obstacles / Barriers

A major barrier for OIB was the lack of capacity to start the venture on its own. The partnership was created to remedy this issue.

## Expertise

Randy Picton, the winemaker at Nk'Mip Cellars, spent six years with a Kelowna-based winery where he worked with a wine master from the University of Davis in California. Nk'Mip Cellars has a dozen positions including Hospitality Manager, Cellar Assistants, Administration, Customer Service Representatives, Vineyard workers, and Foreman.

## NK'MIP DESERT AND HERITAGE CENTRE

Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre (open 2002) is 1000 acres (404 ha) of undeveloped desert land. The land contains 26 plants and animal species that are currently at risk and are unique to the Southern Okanagan Valley.

The Centre contains a Visitors' Centre, Interpretive trails and programs, and Outdoor Village. Guided and self-guided tours are available to the public. An 18,000 square foot facility is being constructed and will "celebrate Okanagan culture and the biological uniqueness".

## Partnerships

The Centre is owned by the OIB and is managed by OIBDC. The Desert and Heritage Centre's General Manager, Brenda Baptiste, oversees the physical operations.

## Community and Leadership Involvement

Brenda Baptiste insists that community involvement is essential to creating a successful business. Chief Clarence Louie comments that there is a certain amount of social responsibility that goes hand in hand with corporate responsibility. The Desert and Heritage Centre was created to address the Osoyoos Indian Band's commitment to preservation of language and cultural development in the community.

## Funding

A financial institution, Osoyoos Indian Band, and OIBDC as well as government agencies helped cover the \$ 4.5 million capital costs of the Centre. Grants are used to fund projects and programs run through the Heritage Centre. Economic Measures funded the Pit Houses, built in the traditional 'Village' on the grounds. Funding sources for the new \$1 million Interpretive Building include Infrastructure Canada and Canadian Heritage.

## Business Planning

The business plan includes projecting attendance, incoming revenue, staff management, and finding funding for projects and programs.

## Land Planning

Planning of the interpretive trail systems, 'Village' area, and Interpretive Centre used the natural features found on the site. The trails were developed with a Landscape Architect.

## Expectations

Four thousand visitors visited the Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre during its opening season (2002). Attendance doubled the next season to 8,000 people, and they are expecting to bring in over 10,000 visitors in 2004.

### **Obstacles / Barriers**

The Centre is located in an endangered ecosystem and is home to many animal and plant species at risk. Development of the Centre and related projects must take into account the special nature of the plant and animal life existing in the area.

### **Expertise**

The Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre require flexible staff who are cross-trained for all service positions (from cashiers to guides). The Centre has ten positions with half of them filled by community members. Expertise is needed to develop and coordinate the programs on plant species, rattlesnakes and wildlife in the area.

### **Current realities**

The most popular attractions at the Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre are the rattlesnake, bug and animal exhibits.

### **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

#### **Community Culture and Traditions**

According to Chief Louie, social responsibility must be balanced with economic development. Economic projects help to sustain social programs. This project has helped bring back stories of the people, which are being recorded and displayed. Community members are learning about traditional building techniques.

#### **Community Healing**

The goal of the OIBDC is to foster economic development in the community. This fostering of businesses will increase the capacity of the people to be self-sustaining. The businesses provide employment, training and experience, increased pride in their accomplishments, and encourage responsibility.

#### **Self-sufficiency**

The Inkameep Vineyard is self-sustaining. There are more community members working at the vineyard than any other business on the reserve. Nk'Mip Cellars is not yet self-sustaining. The goal is that once community members have been trained, they will run the winery. The Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre is not yet self-sufficient, but is aggressively working towards this goal.

#### **Environment**

All three projects have a direct relationship with the environment. The Vineyards utilize the growing capacity of the OIB lands. The Cellars provide a spectacular view of the local scenery and use local grapes. The Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre showcases the natural features of the

area and cultural heritage while preserving the desert conditions.

### **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

Chief Clarence Louie states, "you can't please everybody and you have to stand up and make the decisions that need to be made. It is important to treat these businesses like businesses. Because of the social responsibility of the leadership, community owned businesses tend to be over staffed, but that does not mean that it cannot be profitable at the same time".

#### **Contact Information:**

##### **Inkameep Vineyards Ltd.**

Sam Baptiste, General Manager  
(250) 498-3552

##### **Nk'Mip Cellars**

Donna Faigaux  
(250) 495-9145

##### **Nk'Mip Desert and Heritage Centre**

Brenda Baptiste, General Manager  
(250) 495-790

## WEATHER DANCER 1

Piikuni Nation is located 185 km south of Calgary and east of Pincher Creek.

Piikuni Utilities Corporation (PUC) constructed Weather Dancer 1, a 900 kilowatt test turbine for a larger 100 megawatt wind power project. After twelve years of development and one failed project, Weather Dancer 1 has become a model project for sustainable community development.

### Getting Started Community Camps and Alternative Energies

The idea for Weather Dancer grew out of the local Survival Camps organized in the mid-1970s. The need to provide sustainable energy for camp facilities introduced William Big Bull, project champion, to wind power technology.

### Partnerships

A partnership was created with EPCOR, an Edmonton-based utility company, who provided the finances to build the turbine, the ability to transmit the power, and access to a customer base. Piikuni Utilities Corporation manages the operation of the turbine. A 20-year contract with EPCOR outlines the sale of eighty percent of energy produced to Edmonton customers and the remaining twenty percent to the regional power pool. Piikuni First Nation has an opportunity to buy back EPCOR shares in Weather Dancer 1 after ten years.

### Community and Leadership Involvement

Big Bull maintained connections and communications with the industry, investors and political bodies to keep Piikuni First Nation in the field of wind power development.

Community support for the project was not always strong. A questionnaire provided to the community a number of years ago gauged interest in reviving a wind power project and resulted in Piikuni First Nation Chief and Council committing to the Weather Dancer project.

### Funding

Purchase and construction of the turbine (\$1 million) was covered by EPCOR and the 20-year contract with PUC. \$30,000.00 for the project proposal came from Resource Access Negotiation dollars (RAN). Aboriginal Business



### Quick facts

Part of the Blackfoot Confederacy

On-reserve Population: 2275  
Total Population: 3354  
Reserve Area: 420612.3 ha

Service Centre:  
Lethbridge

Closest City Centre:  
Calgary

Project Type:  
Housing Development

Operators:  
Capital Housing,  
Seabird Island First Nation

Partnerships:  
Seabird Island First Nation,  
Canadian Mortgage and  
Housing Corporation (CMHC),  
and  
Department of Indian and  
Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)

Canada provided \$150,000.00. All the funding required was raised and accessed by the PUC.

The Renewable Energy Credits and tax incentives were able to reduce the cost of providing power.

### Business Planning

The Weather Dancer business plan outlines the requirements of the project development, present and future responsibilities, and expectations for growth and energy production.

### Land Planning

Piikuni First Nation approved a 28.2 ha land permit allowing the PUC and EPCOR to use the land without having it designated.

### Requirements

Environmental assessments, wind studies and consultations were required. Permits were required for the distribution lines transferring energy to the power grid. Planning was needed to purchase, transport and construct the wind turbine. Maintenance plans and repair schedules were developed.

### Obstacles and Barriers

Some community members did not provide their support until after the turbine was erected – they needed to see it in a tangible form. The project team provided updates and information to the community, and answered questions through public meetings.

Community politics played a part in the development of the project. The Cowley Ridge wind power project was shelved the previous decade when a change in leadership occurred. The project was sold to developers, who constructed the wind power project outside of Pincher Creek. Another change of leadership allowed William Big Bull to approach Chief and Council to revive the project he was still working on in his personal time.

### Expertise

A wind power project requires many different types of expertise to keep the planning, development, construction

and operation areas going. Proposals were written, feasibility studies conducted, and a business plan developed. Technical expertise was required to select the turbine and location. There are contracts with local companies who have the knowledge to maintain and repair the structure.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

### **Community culture and traditions**

The philosophy behind the development of Weather Dancer 1 is: to become self-sustaining; provide energy; and give back to the members of the community. A Blackfoot Confederacy Youth Environmental Conference is planned, with the objective of educating the youth about environmental issues. The hope is to open minds to the wind turbines and energy production industry.

### **Community healing**

The money generated from the sale of the “green” electricity produced by Weather Dancer 1 is being placed in a Heritage Trust Fund that will be used to develop and run educational programs in the community. The trust fund will be managed by the community for the community.

“A project like this touches everyone’s home and affects each member of the community,” according to Chief Strikes With A Gun, “organizing ventures and corporations like this, will help the Council bring back values and sustainability in the community. They will be able to give back things that community members deserve as human beings – the things that are lacking in many communities today such as good housing, employment opportunities, a renewed sense of community and accountability.”

### **Self-sufficiency**

One of the driving forces for this project is the issue of being self-sufficient, where the community is able to provide for themselves without having to rely on funding and money from government sources. PUC worked and maintained the goal that Weather Dancer 1 would not require funds from the community or administration programs.

### **Environment**

Weather Dancer is considered a renewable energy production project with minimal impact on the land and environment. The turbine structure requires a minimal land base, and the energy is provided by the naturally occurring winds in the area.

## **Long-term plans**

Long term plans for the community include the development of a 100 Mega watt Wind Farm on the Piikuni First Nation lands. Once the wind farm is expanded, the funds received from the expanded Wind Farm will go toward job creation and further economic development for the members of the community. Another long-term goal is to develop an Environmental Office where information will be available about environmentally sustainable technologies, projects, and issues.

## **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

Proposed projects should look toward the community plan, to help further the ideas and values set out by the members of the community and Council. It is important to get the right advice and experience developing a successful project. However, according to William Big Bull “you have to be careful. There is a lot of bad advice out there. The project will need financial and energy management skills, expertise, and a strengthening of the information base”.

Big Bull indicates, “it is important that all requirements, permits and studies have been taken care of, milestones are set and worked on, and a critical path followed. The project team needs to know how it all works and current trends in the industry and technology fields. There is a lot of hard work to be done, which requires time, energy, and patience to complete. “

“Weather Dancer is a highlight for all First Nations. (Piikuni) opened the door and believed they have access to the technology,” states Chief Peter Strikes With a Gun.

## **Contact Information:**

William Big Bull  
Piikuni Utility Corporation  
Piikuni First Nation  
(403) 965-3001

**TLE LAND MANAGEMENT**

Kawacatoose First Nation is located 120 km north of Regina, Saskatchewan.

Kawacatoose Cree Nation Vision Statement reads: "The Vision of our First Nation is of a happy, healthy, unified people, proud of their Cree culture and identity, and proud of their ability to ensure their own well being, both collectively and individually."

**Getting started – Treaty Land Entitlement Claim**

Kawacatoose First Nation members signed an agreement to have Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) Trust purchase land to satisfy the "Shortfall Acres" allotted to them through an outstanding Treaty Land Entitlement Claim. A Trust Agreement was developed with trustees to oversee the operation of a TLE Land Management Office created to direct the Additions to Reserve Creation (ARC) process.

**The Catalyst and Moving Forward – GIS, Map Production and Land Management**

Kawacatoose TLE Land Management Office is using a Geographic Information System (GIS) program to create an information and mapping database. The office compiles information of existing and newly acquired lands with the mapping system. The TLE office has also purchased a plotter printer to create maps with the GIS program. The community developed a Land Use Policy to manage the lands acquired through the ARC process.

Land Use Policy Mission Statement reads: "To preserve the Kawacatoose lands by allowing it to return to its natural and original state through the process of making and maximizing the best possible use of the land."

**Partnerships**

Provincial and federal government departments have helped provide datasets and information for the GIS database mapping program.

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

The TLE Trust has seven Trustees: four on-reserve and two off-reserve community members, and one member of council. Duties of the trustees include: maintaining records of all transactions; hiring of qualified independent auditors to prepare financial statements; and presenting financial

**Quick facts**

On-reserve Population: 1,094  
Total Population: 2,564  
Reserve Area: 9,709.2 ha  
3,291.3 ha are being added through ARC Process:

Service Centre:  
Regina

Project Type:  
Land purchasing and management

Operators:  
TLE Management Office,  
Kawacatoose First Nation

statements to the Kawacatoose Chief and Council and community members.

**Funding**

Federal and provincial governments provided funds to Kawacatoose First Nation through the Settlement Agreement signed in 2000. Funding for the TLE Land Management Office is provided from the interest accumulated from the investment of TLE Funds and covers the administration costs of the office, training, and equipment required to complete the GIS project. The \$10,000 plotter printer was purchased with funds received through a proposal application.

**Land Planning**

The TLE Land Management Office has developed a Land Use Policy (LUP) that includes pollution prevention, water management, waste disposal and zoning guidelines. The policy applies to all lands belonging to or purchased by Kawacatoose First Nation and outlines regulations and policies to protect the lands, resources and environment from contamination or misuse.

The GIS program and maps will aid in development of zones outlining potential areas for agricultural production, hunting and trapping, and residential use. The database will incorporate the mineral and natural resources and display areas unsuitable for development due to poor drainage, soil conditions, sensitive ecosystem, or cultural importance.

**Expectations**

Kawacatoose First Nation has acquired sufficient acres to meet the shortfall certificate set out by the TLE Claim. Once the properties are converted to reserve status the community can proceed with economic development plans for these areas.

**Requirements**

The ARC Process is the conversion of land to reserve status. The process requires purchasing the land, obtaining the land and mineral titles, and list of improvements made to the land. Approval must be obtained from Federal and Provincial governmental

departments such as Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Natural Resources Canada, and Justice Canada.

### **Obstacles / Barriers**

Kawacatoose pays taxes on the purchased properties during in the ARC process (18-24 months). The community leases out the properties while the applications are being reviewed reducing the costs acquired by the First Nation. The cost of converting surface and mineral titles at Information Services Corporation (ISC) has increased requiring the TLE Trust to pay thousands of dollars more to access each property.

### **Expertise**

Training is required to operate the GIS program and create data tables for the land parcel information. Staff members are trained to use Geographical Positioning System (GPS) equipment to accurately document environmental features and built elements in the community. Staff members also attend conferences such as "Management and Protection of Aboriginal Lands" and "Negotiation Skills Training" to learn about new advances in the field. Feasibility studies are conducted on properties under consideration or bought by the TLE Land Trust.

### **Current realities**

According to a member of council, it is important for Kawacatoose to create an Economic Development office to take advantage of the opportunities that will arise once the Shortfall Certificate is reached and development can occur on the acquired properties.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

### **Community culture and traditions**

The Land Use Policy (LUP) designates areas for hunting, fishing and trapping. Cultural features and locations will also be identified to protect the areas from development including traditional lands where ceremonies are held. The objective is to maintain these spaces in a 'natural state' allowing the community to participate in cultural, social and spiritual activities.

### **Community healing**

Maps created by the GIS project are brought to the school to educate youth on the TLE program and community owned lands. It helps to keep community members informed of what is happening with the TLE Trust and management plans for the community.

## **Self-sufficiency**

The LUP will help to create sustainable economic projects that will contribute to the entire community development.

## **Environment**

Newly acquired agricultural lands are converted to pasture land or hay fields to keep with the objective of the LUP of returning or maintaining the lands in a natural state. Leased lands are subject to restrictions and bans on pesticide and herbicide use. Enforcement will be the responsibility of the Kawacatoose Chief and Council and the TLE Land Manager.

## **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

Geraldine Worm, former TLE Lands Manager, indicates, "It is helpful to communicate with other communities who are going through the same process of converting parcels of land to reserve status. Understanding the process and experiences of other communities enabled Kawacatoose to learn from what has been tried, been successful, and what has not".

Chief Dustyhorn recommends keeping an eye on the financial side of transactions and interest rates of the TLE Funds investments. Also monitor the taxes owing on the properties in ARC process and keep them up to date. The TLE Funds were provided to buy land for the community and it is important to use it for that purpose and to reach the goals outlined by the community members.

Vern Worm, Assistant Land Manager, related that, "Since I've been required to map and manage the lands that Kawacatoose has purchased through the TLE process, and since Kawacatoose went high-tech with a GIS Arc-View 8 [program], I feel that the band is changing the way lands are managed in our community and other bands in the area."

### **Contact Information:**

Vern Worm,  
TLE Management Office  
Kawacatoose First Nation  
(306) 835-2125

**HISTORIC VILLAGE**

Brokenhead Ojibway Nation is located 64 km north of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, in partnership with neighbouring First Nation communities, is in the process of an extensive economic development project that includes a Casino, which opened in 2005. A common vision for the Brokenhead Council is to stabilize and prepare their community for future social, economic and community development.

**The Sustainable Initiative: Brokenhead Ojibway Nation Historic Village**

The Brokenhead Ojibway Nation Historic Village was created in 1996. Community members, who wanted a place to gather, developed the idea in the 1960s. The facilities include 5 km of trails, interpretive building, camping facilities with rental tepees, and pow-wow grounds. Programming at the Historic Village includes plant workshops, a greenhouse, maple syrup production, and school interpretive day-trip programs. The Historic Village's goal is to disburse ecological, cultural, medicinal and environmental knowledge to members of the local community, as well as to visitors from other areas.

**Getting started**

Former Chief Jim Bear and members of the Brokenhead community worked to identify common goals and objectives for Brokenhead Ojibway Nation. In 1986, community members agreed to address the cultural aspects of community life, by constructing a traditional Ojibway village to help prevent further loss of the language, culture, and traditional values and providing a place for traditional education and cultural programs within the community.

**Partnerships**

A recent partnership was developed with the Manitoba Model Forest Network. The partnership plans include use of wetlands located on traditional territory land adjacent to the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation as a "Carbon Sink". New partnerships have also been made with a number of organizations to develop the Brokenhead Wetlands Ecological Reserve (2004). These partnerships will support the preservation of the Brokenhead Ojibway people's natural environment, thereby maintaining the integration of the people, the plants and the animal communities necessary to carry on and pass down the traditional knowledge of the Anishinabeg way of life.

**Quick facts**

On-reserve Population: 450  
Total Population: 1,500  
Reserve Area: 5,412 ha

Service Centre:  
Selkirk

Closest City Centre:  
Winnipeg

Project Type:  
Interpretive and Cultural Centre

Operators:  
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

A planning document, "The Path Process", developed in 1986 by former Chief Jim Bear, was developed through interactive meetings with community members. These meetings were held to brainstorm what was important within the community itself and create a "Mandate of the People". The Chief and Council members ensured involvement of the community in the planning stages throughout this process. Once ideas and projects were identified, financial and feasibility studies were completed indicating viable projects for the community with the available resources, land base, and financial capabilities.

**Funding**

Annual operating costs of the Historic Village are \$48,000. Brokenhead Ojibway Nation Council contributes thirty percent of the total operational budget covering wages, bills, and operating materials. Grants and program bookings cover the remaining seventy percent of the budget. The Economic Development Officer in Brokenhead Ojibway Nation Administration helps with funding

and grant applications.

**Business and Land Planning**

The community accessed expertise from the South East Tribal Council to develop the business plan for the Historic Village that included site analysis, land planning and funding sources. The community had already set aside the land before planning commenced.

The Historic Village program expanded as visitor attendance increased. Programming is based partly on client market demand resulting in specially tailored programmes and group tours.

**Requirements**

Consultants were brought into the community to help make the planning sessions productive and interesting. It was important to be creative to encourage the attendance of community members at the meetings. Community members were also involved in building the Historic Village facility. Planning and Landscape Architectural

consultants were used to design the interpretive grounds and camping areas.

### **Obstacles / Barriers**

The Historic Village has an opportunity to utilize the facility and trails for winter activities. Programming could occur year round. However, the building facility is small and limits the number of participants in the programs. Physical expansion of the facility is required to increase the programs and visitor numbers.

According to Chief Leveque, one barrier development projects encounter is that Federal and Provincial Government funding sources are not always in tune with First Nations needs. Often funding programmes have lapsed before communities are ready to access the resources.

### **Expertise**

The programs offered at the Historic Village require a variety of individuals with specific skills, knowledge and experience. Local elders are hired to conduct interpretive tours highlighting stories about native plant materials, uses, and applications.

### **Current realities**

Community members have indicated a need for promotion of First Nation tourism projects in Manitoba. A coordinated marketing strategy would enable smaller businesses to network with other projects in the area to increase patronage.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

### **Community culture and traditions**

The Brokenhead Ojibway Nation Historic Village was developed after concerns arose about the loss of language, cultural and traditional values in the community. The grounds are used to teach about plant and animal species and habitats found in the area. Elders are involved in the programs and are valued for their knowledge and perspective. Community members gather medicines, berries, and non-timber forest products and use the facility's trails for this purpose. A language CD combining the spoken language, written text, and images to tell stories and legends of the Brokenhead people is another project developed by the Historic Village.

### **Community healing**

According to Chief Leveque, development motivated by community directed planning is a positive and encouraging experience. To see the project begin and then be completed is uplifting and provides community recognition. If the community is not involved, the project will not have the same spirit; this could result in a negative perception of the project within the community.

## **Self-sufficiency**

The Village has one full-time position, one part-time, two to three summer students, and a seasonal work force for clearing the trails and grooming the camping sites. New projects are always being researched and developed. Local businesses and resources are used by the Village whenever possible.

## **Environment**

The Historic Village is an avenue for educating and opening the mind to environmental issues. Maintenance and clearing of the trails is completed using light machinery and in some areas is done by hand to reduce the amount of disturbance to the plant life and environment. Traditional plant communities will be restored along the trails and signage provided for interactive self-guided tours.

## **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

According to former Chief Jim Bear, "there are a lot of economic development studies produced for First Nations that remain on office shelves and not in use. 'Needs' have been identified, but the people have to work to implement plans over a longer period of time. Community plans have to include the people, be adopted by them, and should not change direction. It should be followed by any administration in the community. Any changes to the mandate should also be brought back to the community since they have ownership over the work that was produced. The community should balance economic development and community development".

By setting policies in writing and developing a constitution by community members, the Chief, Council, and administration have guidance for future social and economic development. According to Chief Leveque, this process will create a stronger foundation that won't collapse every two years when council members and administration is changed due to elections.

It is important to have a good business plan that is achievable and begins with initiatives that are possible.

Historic Village Manager Carl Smith also indicates, "it is important to deliver the information in a very straightforward manner and be honest about what you are doing. It is important to have the support of the elders, community leadership and everybody who is connected to the project. Start with what you can handle and have a good business plan that is doable".

Contact Information:

Carl Smith  
Brokenhead Ojibway Historic Village  
Brokenhead First Nation  
(204) 766-2483

**DEBRIS TIMBER HARVESTING**

Chemawawin Cree Nation is located in the town of Easterville 400 km north of Winnipeg, Manitoba on the shores of Cedar Lake.

The Chemawawin people engage in a number of activities dependent on the water resources found adjacent to their community. Cedar Lake once supported the community commercial fishers' livelihood; it continues to provide habitat for fish, waterfowl and wildlife, and food for the Chemawawin people. Activities in the community use the water resources year round with ice fishing and hunting in the winter, and guiding and outfitting operations in the summer.

**Getting started**

Hydro development on Cedar Lake has created disturbances to the lives of the Chemawawin people. The community was relocated in 1964 to the new town of Easterville due to flooding of the community site as a result of the Grand Rapids Hydro Project. An estimated 1,000,000 to 2,800,000 cubic meters of debris is floating in the water and lying on the shores; a result of submerging 1,100 square kilometres of forested land into the lake. Personal safety while travelling on Cedar Lake has been a concern of the Chemawawin Cree Nation.

Community commercial fishermen lost their sources of income when Cedar Lake was closed to fishing for five years. Three main projects were developed to make Cedar Lake safer for community members. The Safe Haven, Patrol Program and Winter Patrol use local members to collect debris, build emergency shelters, check and make safe routes on the lake during the summer, and ice during winter months. A communication network was also created for Cedar Lake, providing assistance to lake travellers and users.

**Partnerships**

Chemawawin Cree Nation has been working with Manitoba Hydro since 1997 to address the concerns and damage to Cedar Lake due to flooding. Issues being addressed are navigational and shoreline access problems due to submerged and floating wood debris.

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

Community leadership took the initiative to ensure community members had employment when Cedar Lake closed to fishing. Chemawawin Cree Nation hired all



**Quick facts**

**On-reserve Population: 1,177**  
**Total Population: 1,461**  
**Reserve Area: 4,747 ha**

**Service Centre:**  
**Grand Rapids**

**Closest City Centre:**  
**The Pas**

**Project Type:**  
**Employment and Revitalization**

**Operators:**  
**Chemawawin Cree Nation**

eighty-one community fishermen, for at least three years, as part of a revitalization project.

**Funding**

Manitoba Hydro has provided funds through compensation negotiations and agreements with Chemawawin Cree Nation. For example \$2.2 million over 5 years will go toward economic opportunities and programs in the community. The costs to construct the debris wood chipping facility (\$1.6 million) were covered through contributions by Manitoba Hydro (\$1 million), Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's (INAC) Resource Acquisition Initiative (\$250,000), and Chemawawin Cree Nation (\$350,000). A variety of other funding programs were accessed to fund the Debris Timber Harvesting initiative. Six months of funds were provided through Manitoba Hydro's Work Aboriginal Program (WAP). Contributions to the Patrol Program also included 2 boats supplied by Manitoba Hydro and one by the First Nation.

**Business and Land Planning**

Ininew developed the business plan for the Chemawawin Debris Timber Harvesting Corporation. Ininew is a project management company operated by Mosakahikm Cree

Nation, Tataskweyah Cree Nation and Chemawawin Cree Nation and specializes in planning and implementing capital projects.

**Expectations**

The major component of the Debris Timber Harvesting project was the construction of a chipping plant. The volume of debris in the lake was estimated at providing 60 to 150 years supply of product for the business.

**Requirements**

Work conducted on Cedar Lake requires approval by Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). A Work Permit, that identifies type and extent of work being completed, ensures that regulations and protocols are followed. Exclusive rights have also been granted to Chemawawin Cree Nation to salvage the timber in and around the shorelines of Cedar Lake.

## **Obstacles / Barriers**

The community has not been able to chip the harvested debris from Cedar Lake due to stones embedded in the wood that damages the blades of the machine. Repairs to the chipper and replacement blades increased the operating cost of the project. The wood is still being collected and transported to The Pas, while additional value added processes are being investigated.

Weather and equipment is also a challenge for the workers. Summer storms and high water levels have prevented workers from going out onto the lake and scattered the debris already collected. Unknown underwater conditions can damage equipment as well.

### **Expertise**

Guides and workers require navigational skills. They must be able to travel on the lake, while watching for submerged debris. Management skills are required to coordinate efforts and worker crews.

### **Current realities**

Harvesting wood debris from Cedar Lake can be dangerous work that is labour intensive. According to the program Coordinator, Robert Walker, a Chemawawin community member, the lake has changed and can be unpredictable at times. Safety of the community members and workers comes first.

The coordinator needs the skills to coordinate the multiple programs. Robert Walker indicates that the ability to listen and get to the bottom of the issues and concerns is necessary, especially when coordinating a number of programs with up to 150 people. The coordinator has to make sure everything is stocked with the necessary parts and accessories. The coordinator also has to work with the inspectors and Cree Nation Administration office.

### **Future Growth**

Future plans and growth of the programs will rely on the development of value added processes for the debris collected from Cedar Lake.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

### **Community culture and traditions**

The Debris Timber Harvesting initiatives allow individuals to work on the lake that provided a livelihood for the Chemawawin people. The programs fostered a connection with Cedar Lake even when the community members could not fish the lake. Removing the debris hazard provides community members a safer environment.

## **Community healing**

The developed initiatives have brought members together to clean up the area through improvement projects making the community look better. The community has instituted a broadband communication system, connecting all people around the lake, and providing access to help in emergencies.

The project has impacted the youth of the community as well. They used to get into a lot of trouble, according to the program coordinator, however now with the initiatives developed, the individuals have more responsibilities and more economic dollars are put into community resources.

### **Self-sufficiency**

The program is leading to a number of spin-off ventures for community members. Guiding and outfitting training is occurring, supplying more work for community members.

### **Environment**

The project's intent is to help return the lake to a more natural state. Removal of the debris will help to restore the fish and wildlife habitat, allow plant communities to re-establish along the shorelines and improve safe access to the shoreline.

### **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

According to Robert Walker, Program Coordinator, "be consistent will all workers, the main people, the foremen, and with work safety. Train the people, use those you have trained and use the proper equipment. It is important to have a good working relationship with the employees and workers". He does this by involving them in the process and decisions. Walker listens to their concerns and asks for recommendations for better ways to do their jobs, "It is important that when the workers do a good job, that they are recognized for their work".

### **Contact Information:**

Chief Clarence Easter  
Chemawawin Cree Nation  
(204) 329-2161

**MANOMIN CANADIAN WILD RICE**

Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation is located 30 km east of Dryden in Northwestern Ontario. The community is on the shores of Wabigoon Lake.

Wabigoon Lake has a number of economic ventures in the community that use resources available in the region. Seasonal employment opportunities in the community include harvesting wild rice, work in the Noopimiing Anokeewin Inc. logging cooperative and the recent development of the Wabigoon Saaga'igan Gitigaan Tree Nursery.



**Getting Started – Wild Rice Production**

Wild rice was a “staple” food for the Ojibway people of Wabigoon Lake region. Wild rice products have reached the world market creating a demand for the product naturally occurring in the area. In the 1970s, when green wild rice fetched \$3 a pound, tribal organizations in the region discussed setting up a wild rice cooperative to capitalize on the growing market and provide economic opportunities for the First Nations.

**The Catalyst and Moving Forward**

Kagiwiosa Manomin Inc., established in 1987, processes 20 to 150 thousand pounds of Manomin Canadian Wild Rice each year. Local community members can harvest up to 6,000 pounds a day, during the six-week harvesting period starting in August. Manomin incorporates First Nation traditional knowledge of wild rice phenology (life-cycle), harvesting methods, and processing with modern technologies to produce their product. The company uses time-honoured methods of roasting the green wild rice grains over a slow Trembling Aspen wood fire to maintain the taste, feel and texture of traditionally produced wild rice. Modern machines are used to remove the hulls from the grains replicating the dancing or treading used in traditional hulling methods. The finished rice product is exported to European, Japanese and Australian markets. Even though the company is small, they have been able to maintain their share of the wild rice market by producing a quality and diversified product.

**Partnerships**

The Kagiwiosa Manomin Enterprise includes Kagiwiosa Manomin Inc. and Noopimiing Anokeewin Inc. a First Nation logging cooperative. General Manager Joe Pitchenese runs both cooperatives.

**Quick facts**

**On-reserve Population: 152**  
**Total Population: 507**  
**Reserve Area: 5209.2 ha**

**Service Centre:**  
**Dryden**

**Project Type:**  
**Wild Rice Production and Processing**

**Operators:**  
**Kagiwiosa Manomin Inc.**

**Community Involvement**

After years of talking about starting a production facility and inactivity, Joe Pitchenese decided to set up the cooperative in the community. The cooperative relies on members of the community to harvest the green wild rice for the plant. The facility processes the rice for market sales but also provides the service for community members’ household rice stocks.

**Funding**

Proposals were used to build the Kagiwiosa Manomin Inc. processing plant. Loans and financing were obtained from Canadian Alternative Investment Cooperative (CAIC) and funding provided by the Native Economic Development Program available in the 1980s. Grants through Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario (FedNor) and Industry Canada were used to develop Wild Rice Muesli Bars.

Sales of Manomin Canadian Wild Rice, over \$100,000, cover the costs of production, organic certification, and salaries of the seasonal staff members and production manager. Manomin pays \$1 a pound for hand picked green rice and \$0.75 a pound for mechanically collected rice. In years when green rice production is low in the area, Manomin buys green rice from other regions, increasing production costs.

**Business Planning**

Kagiwiosa Manomin Inc. does not have a business plan in place for Manomin Canadian Wild Rice brand. New products being research and developed by Manomin require grants and business plans to get the product “off the ground”.

Manomin certifies their rice products as organic with Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA) International. OCIA is a worldwide standard for certified organic excellence. This certification seal enables Manomin product to be exported as an organic product in global markets.

**Requirements**

Manomin Canadian Wild Rice product is exported to international markets and must meet all guidelines set out by provincial and federal government organizations. The

lakes where the rice is harvested are monitored and require certification under the OCIA. Certification requires that the company uses sustainable practices and the grains are harvested from defined sites. These sites are to be maintained in a natural state and are not cultivated or otherwise managed. Fertilizers or pesticides are not to be used in wild rice production.

### **Obstacles / Barriers**

The price of wild rice products has dropped in recent years. This is due to expansion of commercial wild rice farms and subsidy programs. Increased competition and reduction in processing costs has forced Manomin to market their product in new ways. Improvements to processing methods are needed to lower production costs and stay competitive with larger companies.

The number of community members harvesting wild rice has dropped. Harvesting by traditional methods has been replaced by modern techniques. The change has brought higher yields of wild rice, but has also increased the cost of harvesting.

### **Expertise**

Knowledge of the region and of wild rice is essential to harvesters and the production manager who monitor the areas and collect the ripened green wild rice grains.

Richard Mclvor developed the processing method used by the company. It took Mclvor, under the guidance of an Elder, three years to learn how the wild rice was supposed to taste. During this time the process used to roast and hull the grains was adjusted until the product resembled traditionally produced rice. The roasting, hulling, sorting and packaging process employs three people for 4 weeks.

Product development for new wild rice health bars required expertise in food production and marketing. The researchers developed the recipes, ingredients, and packaging of the Wild Rice Muesli Bar.

### **Current realities**

Wild rice production is a seasonal project and is dependent on weather and water conditions. The water levels, amount of rice naturally seeded and harvested varies each year. Some seasons have record yields while others produce reduced yields of rice.

### **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions Community culture and traditions**

Wild rice is traditionally harvested using canoes and requires some intensive physical labour. Manomin supports traditional harvesting practices as well as modern techniques that use larger boats and harvesting equipment.

Manomin has been trying to educate the wild rice consumers about the traditional ways wild rice was produced and the differences it makes to the quality of the product. For example older community members like their rice “more green” than the black rice produced for international markets.

### **Community healing**

Kagiwiosa Manomin Inc. depends on the community members to provide the green wild rice for processing. The company provides seasonal employment that enables community members to participate in traditional practices and gets them out onto the lakes.

### **Self-sufficiency**

Manomin has developed value added products made from the wild rice. Production of the health bars will be transferred to Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation and managed by James Kroeker, developer of the concept. Gift Baskets and packages available from Manomin also include products from other First Nation communities and companies.

### **Environment**

Manomin Wild Rice is certified as an organic product. This certification requires that the lake where the rice is collected from be certified as well. Artificial fertilizers are not used and the wild rice seeds naturally, requiring no intervention in the natural process.

### **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

Richard Mclvor, Production Manager, advises, “Marketers want a certain type of product. Right now they want the black wild rice, while First Nations prefer the green or brown grains. You have to go with what the market wants. But I’m trying now to educate the buyers about other types of rice. You have to constantly monitor your product for consistent quality. The taste has to be just right.”

“Through our community store we find out what the public wants. They come in, buy our product, and tell us how they like it. Marketing is a big plus on this end getting it out to the public. The Internet is a contact for everybody, consumers, marketers, and buyers. We have a website.”

Contact Information:

Richard Mclvor  
Manomin Canadian Wild Rice  
(807) 938-6927

[www.canadianwildrice.com](http://www.canadianwildrice.com)

**NIIGON TECHNOLOGIES LTD.**

Moose Deer Point First Nation is located on the O'Donnel Point peninsula along the eastern shore of Georgian Bay and is adjacent to the O'Donnel Point Provincial Nature Reserve. The community is accessible by Provincial Highway 69 and is 2 hours north of Toronto halfway between Toronto and Sudbury, Ontario.

The community vision is "Proudly working together to build a prosperous and healthy environment that promotes independence, honours and respects our values, and enhances our way of life."

**Getting started**

Niigon Technologies was a shared vision between former Chief J. Edward Williams and Robert Schad. The project grew from a chance encounter between Mr. Schad (President of Husky Injection Molding Systems Limited, President of the Schad Foundation, and a local cottager) and community members who assisted him during vehicle problems as he was passing through the community. A relationship with community members ensued leading to discussions on different projects that could be developed within the community during the 1990s.

Niigon is an Ojibway word meaning "the future". The production facility is a World Class Injection Molding Facility that is a showplace of manufacturing automation, efficiency, and environmental responsibility. The project opened its doors in October 2001.

**Partnerships**

Moose Deer Point partnered with Husky Injection Molding Systems Ltd., a leading supplier of injection molding equipment and services, to develop Niigon Technologies. Community members toured the Husky operation and facilities in Bolton, Ontario. Husky assisted in launching the operation in Moose Deer Point First Nation. They provided training for the new workers and coordinated on-site training once the manufacturing equipment was installed.

**Quick facts**

Member of United Anishnaabeg Councils

On-reserve Population: 200  
Total Population: 435  
Reserve Area: 250 ha

Closest City Centre:  
Hamilton

Project Type:  
Injection Molding Facility

Operators:  
Niigon Technologies Ltd.

Partnerships:  
Husky Injection Molding Systems Ltd.

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

Chief and Council and members wanted to establish a business that contributed to and helped define future economic opportunities for the community. Planning for the facility was initiated in 1998 with finalization of the partnership. A Sustainable Community Committee, consisting of members of Moose Deer Point, oversaw parts of the process.

**Funding**

Both the Federal and Provincial governments provided funding for the project (including INAC). Additionally, Aboriginal Business Canada (ABC), Husky, the Schad Foundation, and the community provided support. Funding was received from the Schad Foundation, which also directs 20% of Husky's charitable budget, as part of their program to support environmental projects and education. Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and the Ogemawahj Tribal Council helped fund training of community members for the project.

**Business and Land Planning**

The planning process for the project took a year and a half. The initial business plan covered the first five years of the project including start-up, expansion of production, and operations. Subsequent plans and re-evaluation of the production rates and projections are to occur at three year intervals. Consultants from outside the community were brought onto the project team by ABC to help develop the financial components of the plan.

Moose Deer Point First Nation has a land use plan designating residential and commercial development areas. Niigon Technologies was the catalyst for completing the land use plan.

**Requirements**

To undertake the project and break ground, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was needed, along with a designation of the land under a community vote, and a Section 25 permit (issued by INAC).

## **Obstacles / Barriers**

During the initial phases of the project, a small group formed with the intent to stop the project from proceeding. A community referendum allowed the project to proceed when 90% of the votes were in favour of the project. There were concerns about how much of the water the facility would consume, taxing the community's supply. It was decided to 'truck in' water from outside of the community for the needs of the facility.

### **Expertise**

An outside agency was brought in by the community during the planning process to ensure objectivity of the project plan. Specialized expertise was provided by the private sector. They engaged in various roles including arranging meetings and making sure required project management activities occurred.

Community members, who were hired as employees of the facility, attended an accelerated program at Humber College for 4 months and were provided 'on the job' training internships at one of Husky's production facilities.

### **Current realities**

An objective of automated production companies is the reduction of the number of personnel required to operate the facility. In Moose Deer Point First Nation and Niigon Technologies Ltd. this objective must be balanced with the issue of providing employment opportunities for community members. The project was slated as an economic driver that will aid future development in the community by increasing capacity of the community members.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

### **Community culture and traditions**

A painting by Andrew Bainbridge in the main lobby of the Niigon building represents the community, and how the community and clans came together to make this project possible. The community is very close knit, and the families were represented in the decision making process. The decision to have the plant blend in naturally with the rest of the community was made by the families in Moose Deer Point First Nation.

## **Community healing**

The Niigon building has a Health and Wellness Centre for the staff, and has space for meetings that is available to community members. It is very important to the community, as well as to Husky, that health and wellness is an integral part of the project. The staff that work at Niigon Technologies also receive similar benefits to those received by Husky staff. "Healthy and happy people like to come to work which is why we have less than 1% absenteeism", said Sheryl St. Pierre, a Quality Manager. The company provides open houses for community members to tour the facility and see what the business is doing.

### **Self-sufficiency**

Niigon Technologies is well on its way to being self-sufficient, and has in-kind support from Husky on an as needed basis. Two new positions were planned for the Fall of 2004 to accommodate growth of the organization.

### **Environment**

The site and building development used construction techniques that promote environmental sustainability of the site. An extensive environmental assessment (EA) was conducted for the project, and included participation from the University of Guelph. During the EA, an endangered species was discovered in the area for the proposed building, which resulted in moving the facility to an alternative location. The building (with the exception of the manufacturing equipment) is solar powered by a 40 kW photovoltaic system and has motion sensors to activate the lights to conserve energy. Skylights were also used in the building. In the evening, curtains cover the large windows reducing light pollution and preventing interference with natural habitat outside the building. A bio-filtration pond surrounded with native plant species naturally filters wastewater created by the plant.

### **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

Plan and look at all of your options. Ensure community involvement and get endorsement throughout the project. Have community meetings, and send out notices in the community newsletter. Look for funds, information and human resources for your project. Separation of business and politics is key, says Rhonda King, member of Council, Moose Deer Point First Nation.

Contact Information:

Niigon Technologies Ltd  
Moose Deer Point First Nation  
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**HEALTHY HOUSING PROGRAM**

The Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte are located on the Tyendinaga Reserve, 10 km east of Belleville, Ontario, and have been settled there since 1784. The community is situated on the edge of Bay of Quinte on the north shore of Lake Ontario, and is accessible from Highway 401 that runs between Ottawa and Toronto, Ontario.



**Getting started**

The project was developed due to a shortage of housing in the community. The community adopted the R-2000 standard of building for rental houses in 1993 as a way to solve a mould problem that was developing in houses built by conventional construction methods. The housing program has won numerous federal and provincial awards, and many First Nations have come to view the program as an example of excellence in the field of housing.

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

The Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte Council built the first R-2000 home with community members trained under many training programs. The building of one house became the classroom for the trainees to learn R-2000 house construction methods.

According to Chief Donald Maracle, the community's housing program has a high level of involvement by both community and Council. Community leadership took the initiative in 1970 to start a mortgage program giving participants up to 30 years to repay mortgages, with mortgage amounts available from Council up to \$80,000. The housing program was designed to meet the social needs of the community, be holistic, and accommodate all members in the community. The community worked with a housing design firm to develop the R-2000 barrier free homes, which are certified by CMHC as Healthy Houses.

**Funding**

A number of funding sources were accessed for the community's housing program. A great portion comes from INAC and rents and mortgages paid by community members. As well as, the BMO Loan Guarantee Program was negotiated between Bank of Montreal and Council on behalf of its members to guarantee amounts loaned to community members. The Loan Guarantee Program has interest rates at Prime plus 0.5%. There are currently 22 mortgages, with a value of approximately \$2 million under the program. Subsidies from CMHC and the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) and other

grants were also accessed. Human Resources Development Canada programs were accessed to train people for the construction industry.

**Business and Land Planning**

The program anticipates about 20 new homes being built in the community per year with 11 guaranteed mortgages. A community plan is in place that designates areas for continued growth; a capital plan is also in place.

The housing and construction industry is one of the largest employers in the community. The communities' parks and roads have been enhanced with the housing revenues. An investment portfolio worth tens of millions is owned and controlled by the community for the benefit of future generations.

**Requirements**

The community operates under a Certificate of Possession (CP) system, meaning members own their parcels of land in the community. Much of the activity that occurs in the rental units owned by

Council is regulated through rental agreements contractually, rather than through by-laws. By utilizing a collection of programs available through CMHC, such as the Non-Profit Rental Housing Program, Direct Lending, Home Adaptations for Seniors Independence Program (HASI), and others, Council was able to mix and match programs to meet the diverse needs of the community. The negotiated deal with BMO allowed members to have added versatility to meet any other areas not covered under any of the programs offered by CMHC or Mohawks of Bay of Quinte.

**Obstacles / Barriers**

Prior to the design and implementation of the community's housing program, financial constraints were among the largest obstacles to overcome in the housing program. Public education was also needed to inform people of the R-2000 standard for home building. Additionally, the infrastructure required to support new housing (sewers, roads, water, etc.) was an obstacle, given that its development tends to occur more slowly than does the community's need for housing.

**Quick facts**

On-reserve Population: 2,200  
 Total Population: 6,000  
 Reserve Area: 7,274 ha

**Service Centre:**  
 Belleville

**Project Type:**  
 Community housing program

**Operators:**  
 Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte

## Expertise

Community members are trained in the construction trade through HRDC, Natural Resources Canada, and the Enerquality Corporation to build R-2000 homes for the First Nation. Thanks to their partnership the First Nation has a trained, local pool of construction personnel.

### Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions

#### Community culture and traditions

An Elder's Lodge was built on land purchased from a community member, and in addition, several "granny flats" were built for Elders as well. The ground level homes are designed to be comfortable and accessible for people with mobility issues with wider doors and hallways, radiant heat in the floor, lower toilets, lower counter tops, and cupboards that are more easily accessible. One community Elder had been living in her R-2000 barrier free 'granny flat' designed home for 4 years. With limited mobility due to arthritis, she had applied for a barrier free house that was easier to navigate.

#### Community healing

Community healing has been integrated into the housing program, policies and development. Helping community members address personal and family issues promotes a healthy lifestyle that encourages the maintenance and care for their homes and financial responsibility.

#### Self-sufficiency

Since its inception in 1970, the mortgage program has provided hundreds of mortgages totalling \$12.45 million, with all of the money going back into the housing program. Council currently owns 130 rental properties, with 65 of them being built to R-2000 standards. The housing and mortgage program helps to stop economic leakage of money and people leaving the community, by employing community members in the construction trade and having a lumberyard on reserve to provide building materials. In addition, two landscaping companies operated by community members provide any needed landscaping services.

#### Environment

Environmental considerations were a key component of the decision to build the new R-2000 homes. The energy efficient homes reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as part of the community's commitment to the Kyoto Accord, and reflect increasing community environmental awareness. Parks and green spaces are incorporated into the new subdivisions. In one project, students in the community helped build a habitat restoration pond with introduced wildlife. The community has concerns with groundwater issues stemming from pollution and water quality is an important issue in the new subdivisions. The community is researching options for alternative wastewater treatment, such as artificial wetlands.

## Long-term plans

The housing program intends to become totally self-sufficient, and evolve into a housing authority that is capable of dealing with all areas of housing in the community. An Eco-Village is also being considered and planned for a new development area of the community.

### Messages to Other First Nations Communities

Chief Donald Maracle says: "Public education is key in getting community support and word of mouth is important for getting information out. Addressing social issues is key to having a successful mortgage program."

Chris Maracle, Director of Housing, Parks, and BPM at the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, says: "Do your background research, and be practical, as you have limited resources. Keep the work in the community, and invest in training. You need both the political support and the community support, because if the community doesn't believe in it, it won't happen".

#### Contact Information:

Chris Maracle  
Housing, Parks and BPM  
Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte  
(613) 396-3424

**AWAZIBI MAPLE SYRUP PRODUCTION**

Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation is located in Quebec, 140 km north of Ottawa/Hull on Highway 105. The community is found on the outskirts of the town of Maniwaki and the community is a member of the Algonquin First Nation people. Kitigan Zibi means “Garden River” in the Algonquin language.



The community’s land and traditional land use area consists of a mixed deciduous forest, a resource which supports the community members. The maple trees found in the region have been tapped to make syrup for generations. The province of Quebec produces 80% of the world’s maple syrup.

**Getting started**

In 1997, Verna McGregor from Kitigan Zibi Economic Development office contacted Masters of Business Administration (MBA) students from McGill University to conduct a feasibility study on a maple syrup production business in the community. Maple syrup production has been a traditional activity practiced by the local Algonquin people. After reviewing the findings, Kitigan Zibi Council felt they had the capacity to set up the project.

The community utilizes the area locally known as the “Sugar Bush” for the production of Awazibi Maple Syrup that blends a time honoured practice and culture with modern technology. Construction of the facility started in 1999 with the first batch of maple syrup being produced in 2000. The facility produced over 11,000 litres of pure maple syrup in the 2004 season. Sap water is collected during three to four weeks starting in late February to early March.

**Partnerships**

The Awazibi Maple Syrup Production is owned and operated by the First Nation. The company is a member of the Quebec Federation of Maple Syrup Board, supplying them with syrup. The board sells the bulk syrup wholesale.

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

Community members were notified that Kitigan Zibi Council intended to develop the local “Sugar Bush” into a maple syrup production facility and needed workers. Thirty community members responded to the notice and training began in the syrup industry. The business employs three

full-time staff members (seasonally) who are responsible for production and maintenance of the tree taps and collection lines. An additional 9-12 seasonal workers are employed to help set-up taps and inspect lines before production begins.

**Funding**

Start-up cost for the production facility was \$600,000. The community accessed funding available through programs by Aboriginal Business Canada (ABC) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) who each contributed up to 50% of the funds required.

**Business and Land Planning**

MBA students did the feasibility study through the Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) program, which provides expertise to First Nation communities. The Royal Bank of Canada and the CESO program covered the cost of the plan.

The Awazibi Pure Maple Syrup production is situated on a 57-hectare mixed growth forest. Over a decade ago, the community made the decision to protect common lands, including the sugar maple stands tapped by Awazibi.

The business plan recommended starting small with steady expansion of production capacity. Each year the facility expands the number of tree taps (starting with 10,000) increasing production levels. The business has reached the present production capacity that is limited by the size of the holding tanks currently in the facility. Installation of larger tanks will allow the company to add thousands of more taps, increasing production.

**Requirements**

The sugar bush is both federally and provincially regulated and the production facility is registered with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), which licences and inspects the facility, operation, and product. Since the operation is located in the Province of Quebec, the Awazibi must provide the Quebec Federation of Maple Syrup Board with bulk maple syrup to be sold wholesale through the board. The community can then sell their excess product through retail sales.

**Quick facts**

On-reserve Population: 1,450  
 Total Population: 2,606  
 Reserve Area: 18,437 ha

**Service Centre:**  
 Maniwaki

**Closest City Centre:**  
 Maniwaki

**Project Type:**  
 Maple Syrup Harvesting and  
 Processing Operation

**Operators:**  
 Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg

## **Obstacles / Barriers**

For Awazibi Maple Syrup, breaking the general cycle of previous economic models for the region was difficult, due to the seasonal nature of maple syrup production, and many other similar businesses in the region. Trying to convince lending and funding institutions to invest in the Awazibi Maple Syrup operation was also difficult.

Marketing of the community's retail sales requires work to increase the profitability of the product. Maple candy and maple butter are viable 'value added' products that utilize the excess maple syrup being produced by the facility. The opportunities are present but lack of interested community members has prevented the start-up of spin-off operations.

When Awazibi maple syrup production started, there was one individual, Thomas Ferguson, who ran the operation. After the passing of Mr. Ferguson, there was no one trained to carry on the syrup production. New operators were trained in all aspects of production and responsibilities were divided between three individuals. Cross training of the three areas of production operators (tapping and line maintenance, distilling, and bottling) created a more dynamic team whose members can provide needed support and relief during peak production time.

## **Expertise**

Awazibi Pure Maple Syrup initially trained 30 people for 4 months to learn the process of maple syrup production and the sugar bush business. Expertise is required for the tapping and layout of the collection lines, the vacuum collection system, distilling process, bottling and marketing. Marketing and sales is handled through the Economic Development office of Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg.

## **Future Goals**

The plan for future growth for Awazibi Pure Maple Syrup is focusing on its marketing activities to expand its operations, and increase sales. Awazibi Pure Maple Syrup plans to add another 6,200 taps, in addition to its current 12,000 taps to expand its operation.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

### **Community culture and traditions**

Peter Decontie, a community member and Elder, oversees many of the cultural and traditional activities related to the opening of the maple syrup production. He related, "Every season, a traditional ceremony is held for the harvesting of the maple syrup before tapping the trees begins." This involves all community members including Elders, Youth and Women. The ceremony is conducted in Algonquin and everyone does an individual prayer concerning the harvesting". Mr. Decontie explained the significance of the ceremonies, "Right there in the area where the harvesting takes place, it's strictly for the maple trees. Maple trees

are given the first attention because of their gift to our people. Once the harvest is done, we go back and do another ceremony for thanksgiving, and acknowledge the Creator's Gifts, and what the maple tree means to our people."

## **Community healing**

The ceremonies held for the harvest are also times for the community to come together in a spiritual way. Later on, once the harvest is complete, a community pancake breakfast is held where all of the community members come together to celebrate, and are each given a bottle of the maple syrup.

## **Self-sufficiency**

The project is financially self-sustaining. Production and sale of the wholesale product through the Board covers the costs of the operation. Increased marketing in retail sales is expected to increase profits.

## **Environment**

The maple syrup production uses the mixed forest resource located on community lands. Tapping of the maple trees follows guidelines and recommendations that prevent long-term damage or harm to the individual trees or the stand. These guidelines limit the number of taps placed in each tree, the location of the taps around the tree trunk, the minimum trunk diameter of a tapped tree, and the number of times the tree can be used. No environmental assessment was required for construction of the production facility.

## **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

"Planning, marketing, community support, and involvement are key in getting your initiative off the ground", says Frank Meness, a councillor of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg.

Contact Information:

Rebecca Printup  
Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg  
(819) 449-5170

**EAGLE FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT**

Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation is located in Quebec, 140 km north of Ottawa/Hull on Highway 105. The community is found on the outskirts of the town of Maniwaki and the community is a member of the Algonquin First Nation people. Kitigan Zibi means “Garden River” in the Algonquin language.

The community’s traditional lands include much of the area managed by Eagle Forest Project, bordering on the southern edge of Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg lands



**Getting started**

The *Corporation de gestion de la Forêt de l'Aigle* (CGFA), or Eagle Forest Corporation, is an “inhabited forest” with activities such as forestry and eco-tourism. The Quebec government had wanted to move the concept of an “inhabited forest” from an idea to reality, and were looking for potential pilot projects. Eagle Forest is 1 of 14 pilot projects that were developed. Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg is one of the three founding members of the project who met with both levels of government to answer the call for a pilot project.

An “inhabited forest” concept addresses planning for economic development and resources using protective and sustainable practices, and meets the social and cultural needs of the community. Some of the activities occurring in the Eagle Forest include: resource management; timber cruising and forest inventory; harvesting of timber and non-timber forest products; wildlife and habitat management; research; eco-tourism; aerial treks; recreation trail system; interpretive programs; and cottage rentals.

**Partnerships**

The Eagle Forest Project is a partnership between Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg, local companies, organizations, and interested parties. The Eagle Forest Project office is located in Maniwaki and is operated by three full time staff members and six professionals who manage the day-to-day operations, planning and development of the forest resources and areas.

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

In order to participate in the Eagle Forest project Kitigan Zibi Council understood that it would require involvement of community members in the process. Sessions were held in the community to inform people of the Eagle Forest Project. The meetings were used to provide information about what development was to occur and the impact it would have on the activities conducted in the area, on community lands, and by community members. Harvesting of timber in the Eagle Forest provides employment for Kitigan Zibi community members.

**Funding**

The Eagle Forest Project is funded through the harvesting and sale of timber products and ecotourism programs. Revenues from the Eagle Forest Project are approximately \$2-3 million a year. Roughly 80% of the income is generated by timber sales, 10% from tourism, and 10% from other programs. Specific projects and programs within Eagle Forest are developed using funds available through government departments and agencies that are accessed through proposals. The program does not receive core or administrative funding from government sources or the organizations sitting on the Board of Directors.

**Business and Land Planning**

The first 3-year management plan (1996) for the Eagle Forest was developed to gather information on existing resources areas, what goals the project was to achieve, and basic infrastructure in the area. The second plan was a 5-year plan, done by employees working with consultants who specialized in forestry and related activities.

**Requirements**

A partnership agreement between the parties to form the Eagle Forest Project, and the permission of the provincial government were the only requirements for the project to proceed. A board of directors oversees the Eagle Forest Project and makes decisions regarding its operations, growth, and management.

**Quick facts**

On-reserve Population: 1,450  
 Total Population: 2,606  
 Reserve Area: 18,437 ha

Service Centre:  
 Maniwaki

Closest City Centre:  
 Maniwaki

Project Type:  
 Maple Syrup Harvesting and Processing Operation

Operators:  
 Eagle Forest Corporation  
 (Corporation de gestion de la Forêt de l'aigle)

Board of Directors:  
 L'Institut Québécois d'aménagement de la forêt feuillue (IQAFF); La Première Nation Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg; L'Association de chasse et pêche de la réserve Pontiac (ZEC Pontiac); L'Association de chasse et pêche de la Desert (ZEC Bras-Coupe-Desert); Le Club de motoneige Les Ours Blancs; and La Municipalité de Cayamant.

## **Obstacles / Barriers**

Bringing the different organizations, partners and board of directors together and creation of a cooperative working environment was a challenge for the pilot project. It took time to identify and work toward a common goal. A common vocabulary was required, in order for all the participants to understand the goals outlined in the plans.

Finding local expertise for Eagle Forest Project was difficult. Local Kitigan Zibi community members were able to satisfy the labour force needed for harvesting, but did not have the expertise to participate in the scientific research and monitoring roles of the project. Finding these skills in the Maniwaki area was also difficult. Many of the scientists and professionals were brought to town from other regions in the province or from neighbouring provinces.

Much of the work created by the Eagle Forest is seasonal. This requires that harvesters and operators from the local community find alternative work situations during the rest of the year.

### **Expertise**

Eagle Forest Corporation has six professionals and 60 forestry workers staffing all aspects of the project from administration to the forest operations. The management staff includes: a forest engineer; a recreationist; a biologist; a director of operations; an accountant and a finance officer. In addition, Eagle Forest project accesses other experts as required for specific project needs.

The 60 forestry workers (harvesters, operators, etc) are from the local area or members of Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg community. Training and capacity building is occurring within Kitigan Zibi as members learn the new 'norms' or guidelines for sustainable harvesting operations and create a forestry technical team.

### **Current realities**

The Eagle Forest operation is growing. Additional programs and resources are being developed each year. In 2004, an Aerial Trek was erected in the forest canopy, rental cabins and accommodations were constructed, and plans are in the works to expand the Pavillon du Black Rollway, a central meeting and dining place constructed in 1998.

The Eagle Forest Corporation plans on expanding its tourism-based activities, improving forest management process, creating a new way of management in the Upper Gatineau Valley, and building more accommodations for tourists. The Director of Operations, Marc Beaudon, would like to see additional forested land added to the Eagle Forest Project and wants to help create tourism and industry development in the area.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

### **Community culture and traditions**

The Eagle Forest Project is a modern interpretation of Algonquin life in the area, as the "inhabited forest" is used for a multitude of activities, from subsistence living to revenue generation through its various forest-based businesses. The type of employment opportunities available to Kitigan Zibi community members maintains their connection with their traditional territory environment.

### **Community healing**

The community is very proud of the project. The knowledge that Eagle Forest is sustainable and that it will continue to be enjoyed and utilized by future generations has helped the community to face the future with greater hope.

### **Self-sufficiency**

The Eagle Forest has been self-sufficient since its inception, as it generates its own revenues, and pays for its own expenses. Expansion and required infrastructure is financed using profits from the harvesting and tourism activities conducted in the forest area.

### **Environment**

Eagle Forest was a forest reserve before management was handed over to the Eagle Forest Corporation. Previous licences for harvesting were never issued. Environmental assessments were not required for the Eagle Forest Project, although environmental planning was taken into consideration throughout all areas of operations. The Eagle Forest is working on developing indicators and monitoring environment conditions, as well as economic and tourism development.

### **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

"Planning, marketing, community support and involvement are key in getting your initiative off the ground," says Frank Meness, a councillor of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg council.

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Marc Beaudon  
Eagle Forest Corporation  
Maniwaki, Quebec  
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**ALIMENTS TOKA FOODS**

Nation Huron-Wendat is located in Wendake, a suburb of Quebec City.

Huron-Wendat is in close proximity to a large urban centre providing ample opportunity for business development within the community. There are over a hundred businesses owned by community members, and the First Nation owns a business industrial park.

**Getting Started**

Aliments TOKA Foods is a distribution and catering company that focuses on First Nation inspired foods and products. The Wild Edibles label, developed in 2000, was not the first Aboriginal food product line developed by Henri Picard, member of Huron-Wendat First Nation. With Inuit partners from the north, Picard developed an Aboriginal herbal tea project with an Inuit community. Wild Edibles has allowed Henri Picard and his wife to travel internationally to find distributors for a unique line of indigenous, wild, and non-cultivated gourmet foods. TOKA Foods has expanded their service to include catering that offers a unique culinary experience based on wild edible foods in a unique "Aboriginal Progressive Cuisine".

TOKA Foods and Catering was asked to provide culturally inspired food for the Aboriginal Associations at the Cultural Development "Land In-sight" Festival. With the help of family members, one of whom was a culinary chef, TOKA Catering was born. The unplanned venture of TOKA Foods became a hit with the company and was asked to cater local, international, cultural, and government events. TOKA Catering was invited to organize the Government of Canada reception at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002.

**Partnerships**

MAPAQ, (Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec), the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture recommended that Henri contact Gerald Le Gal. TOKA is a distribution company that exports and markets indigenous inspired products. Gerald Le Gal researched and worked with TOKA Foods to develop new products, enabling Picard to concentrate on marketing and distribution of the line. The company uses the production facility owned by Le Gal. Raw materials come from contracts with communities from across Canada.

**Quick facts**

On-reserve Population: 1,265  
 Total Population: 2,982  
 Reserve Area: 355.3 ha

Service Centre:  
 Quebec City

Closest City Centre:  
 Quebec City

Project Type:  
 Food processing, distribution, and catering

Operators:  
 Aliments TOKA Foods

**Community Involvement**

Aliments TOKA Foods is a private business owned by Henri Picard. There was no community involvement in the business development. However, the Huron-Wendat people have utilized the services provided by TOKA Foods Catering to highlight local community business and culture during the World Summit on Forestry in September 2003 where 250 Aboriginal participants from over 100 countries were invited to an Aboriginal gourmet dinner and show.

**Funding**

TOKA Foods business was self-financed and did not receive financial support from the Nation Huron-Wendat Nation nor provincial or federal government programs. Start-up costs for the company were less than \$250,000. TOKA Foods sales, under \$500,000, covers harvesting costs of the wild fruit and vegetable, salaries, production and cost of distributing the product. Catering contracts cover the cost of the food for the event, rental facility and labour.

**Business Planning**

There is no formal business plan for TOKA Foods.

**Expectations**

According to Picard, TOKA Catering can help propel wild indigenous foods products into local, national and international markets. By becoming distributors for Aboriginal products, TOKA Foods provides connections needed to launch new products onto the markets, removing the stress from remote entrepreneurs who may not have the resources to make international network contacts and find buyers for their products.

**Requirements**

The production facility used to process TOKA Foods is Federally approved by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Processing facility that supplies products to TOKA Foods for distribution also requires health inspections and certification.

National and international requirements and laws must also be satisfied in order to export products to the international market. Catering in international locations require local health and safety standards to be followed.

## **Obstacles / Barriers**

Wild Edibles products are sold mainly to international distributors. It takes time and expense to enter the international market and the company must travel to international food shows to exhibit their product. Costs to attend the shows can exceed \$10,000. According to Picard, TOKA cannot successfully export their product and concentrate on the local market at the same time.

There is no assistance for small business to break into the major supermarkets, which is required to increase knowledge and demand for the products locally.

According to Picard and Le Gal, it is difficult to find communities to supply wild fruit and vegetables consistently. New companies are venturing into the wild edible food field with the increased exposure of the market. The increased demand for the plants has also increased the cost of the raw materials and reduced availability for the communities, pickers and harvesters.

## **Expertise**

Henri Picard and Danielle Bellange handle marketing and distribution of TOKA Foods. A production manager develops the recipes and processes the products for distribution. Contacts need to be made and maintained with communities and harvesters gathering the fruit and vegetables. The catering services provided by TOKA Foods use the services of a designer chef, who develops the menus and recipes for the events. The chef must be experienced in organizing, planning and preparation for small and large functions.

## **Current realities**

Gathering wild fruit and vegetables is seasonally based. Picking occurs between April and November with August and September being the busiest months. Vegetables require processing within the day, and fruit can be frozen and processed at a later date. Frozen fruit require extra space and more equipment for storage.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

### **Community culture and traditions**

TOKA Foods has contributed to the exposure of edible wild plants in local and international markets while TOKA Catering has allowed Aboriginal products to be introduced to a wide range of consumers. The products being produced draw from traditional harvesting techniques and preparation of indigenous foods.

For the Indigenous Peoples' Forest Forum, Nation Huron-Wendat requested that TOKA Foods develop an event to host Indigenous Delegates attending the XII World Forest Congress 2003. A performance was created with the help

of a local play write to discuss "protecting the forest" using dance, song and wild food selection. The play provided a showcase for the community to share their perspective and culture with visitors.

## **Community healing**

TOKA tries to utilize First Nation businesses for the products used in Wild Edible and TOKA Catering services. TOKA uses caribou, arctic char, salmon, smoked sturgeon, and cranberries from communities around Canada. This support provides employment opportunities and encourages business development to occur in remote communities.

## **Environment**

The company uses wild fruit and vegetables that are non-cultivated, harvested by hand, and harvested using sustainable techniques to ensure prosperity of the plants in the wild. However, not all the companies in the industry are using sustainable harvesting techniques. This over-harvesting pressure is resulting in the population reduction of some plant species. Future regulations on harvesting of wild plants may need to be developed.

## **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

Henri Picard recommends taking it slow when developing a business. In the catering company it was important to get the recipes down pat before putting the product on the market. The company did not have the resources to develop a permanent kitchen facility, so it utilized kitchens for rent in the city in which their events were being held.

Food quality is a high priority in the distribution and catering aspects of the business. Picard does not want to take risks with the foods he is providing. He is adamant that only federally approved foods are used in his events, which can limit the use of meats communities would provide such as moose, deer or beaver.

Communities and companies need to work together to advance the industry. It costs a lot to travel and participate in international trade shows to make the contacts needed to export products internationally. By combining resources the industry can move forward, benefiting all the companies.

It is also important to set up long-term relationships with the communities and individuals harvesting the fruit and vegetables. The key is to develop a network of harvesters that helps build the capacity to work together in the following years.

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Ailments TOKA Foods  
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**UNAMA'KI INSTITUTE OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

Eskasoni First Nation is a member of the Mi'kmaq people found in Nova Scotia, Maine, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland regions. The community is located 50 km southeast of the town of Sydney, on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. The community's lands are confined to a small area with little room for expansion. The limited land base has presented the community with a number of environmental concerns about pollution, watershed, and wildlife habitat.



Five First Nation communities, situated around Bras d'Or Lake, are working together to manage and protect the natural resources and watershed of the lake and Unama'ki District.

In 1999, the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources Institute (UINR) was developed by Eskasoni Fish and Wildlife staff members and is directed by and represents all five bands on Cape Breton Island.

**Getting started**

In the past, the Eskasoni First Nation community has developed a number of environmental and resource based projects including: oyster farms and fisheries; acquiring licences for snow crabs; shrimp, lobster, and round fishing. Eskasoni Fish and Wildlife Commission (EFWC) was developed in the community, and supports numerous local scientists and professionally trained researchers. EFWC engages in research and has laboratory facilities for conducting scientific tests and monitoring of the lake conditions.

Staff members of the EFWC developed the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR). The goal of the institute is to address the environmental and economic issues facing the water and resources of the area. UINR addresses management of resources and possible development in the region. In 2001, UINR formed the Pitu'paq committee consisting of the five First Nation communities of Cape Breton Island, as well as the five municipalities and organizations within the Bras d'Or Lakes watershed to address concerns regarding septic issues in the lakes.

**Partnerships**

UINR conducts projects for the Departments of Fisheries and Oceans, Natural Resources Canada and Parks Canada. UINR has conducted workshops bringing federal,

provincial, municipal, and First Nation governments together to discuss issues affecting all the parties. A development plan for the watershed was formulated and agreements signed by Georgia Pacific and Stora ENSOPort Hawkesbury, giving UINR authority to manage the natural resources on their properties.

UINR has developed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the University College of Cape Breton (UCCB) and the Bedford Institute of Oceanography (BIO) to conduct collaborative scientific research on Bras d'Or Lake, natural resources within and around Cape Breton Island. UINR also works with the forest industry and cottage owners.

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

UINR's board of directors is comprised of the five Mi'kmaq Chiefs of Unama'ki (Cape Breton). The Institute has a Technical Committee made up of representatives from the five communities, as well as members from UCCB and the Union of Nova Scotia Indians (UNSI).

Albert Marshall, an Eskasoni Elder, acts as liaison between the UINR and the Elders in the community. UINR contracts work using local community members and organizations. The office employs six full-time employees, four of whom are community members.

**Funding**

UINR does not receive core funding and submits proposals to grantors for project funding. UINR has agreements with Stora forest industry to provide scholarships for community members. UINR has a contract with Georgia Pacific, a gypsum mining company, to receive five cents for every ton removed from the mine. This \$100,000 goes toward funding scholarships, conducting traditional knowledge research on the company's mine sites, and restoration of the old mine areas. UINR also applied for funding from the Aboriginal RM program in Ottawa to develop training for Native Guardians and accessed funding from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada programs.

**Quick facts**

**On-reserve Population: 3,071**  
**Total Population: 3,649**  
**Reserve Area: 4,194.4ha**

**Service Centre:**  
 Sydney

**Closest City Centre:**  
 Halifax

**Project Type:**  
**Environmental research and management**

**Operators:**  
**Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources**

## **Business and Land Planning**

UINR works on proposals each year that meet the mission and goals of the institute but does not have a formal business plan in place. Work plans are outlined for the year, which indicate what the board would like to see be addressed, what areas need further research, Elders' concerns, and funding issues.

### **Requirements**

Professional qualifications and certification are needed for designing and conducting scientific research projects. The field researchers need the proper scientific background and training to perform the tests and follow standard procedures for baseline data collection. UINR researchers follow environmental guidelines set out by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Department of Natural Resources.

UINR has four biologists on staff that develop the research projects. Individuals are needed to record Traditional Knowledge, monitor the shorelines, and collect and process the samples. UINR hires local workers and works with local organizations such as EFWC to provide expertise. Subcontractors were used to develop a GIS mapping project and reports.

### **Obstacles / Barriers**

According to a community member, First Nation communities had rights but no responsibility or say in the management of the resources. An obstacle UINR faced was working with federal, provincial, municipal, and First Nation governments to sort out the issues surrounding jurisdiction over land and water regulation. The First Nation communities have trained Native Guardians to provide stewardship of resources but they have no powers to enforce the resource management plan.

Government departments have their own priorities and UINR has objectives set out by the Board of Directors. All partners have to agree on the scope and objectives of the project to meet the needs of all parties involved.

To succeed UINR needs to secure more community members who have scientific training. The community needs to have the ability to offer these graduates the same type of stability, income level, and benefits available at other organizations such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

## **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

### **Community culture and traditions**

Projects completed by UINR use traditional knowledge provided by community members, which is recorded onto the GIS maps. The mapping provides a detailed account of how community members use the harvesting, fishing and trapping areas in the watershed and on the lake. The

Native Guardian program uses local community members, and will provide educational opportunities for the participants in traditional and modern technologies.

### **Community healing**

The new generation of university graduates in the Eskasoni community brings a unique perspective to the table, with traditional knowledge and formal training. These students encourage others to complete post secondary education and go back to the community and apply their new skills. UINR is committed to including all members of the Unama'ki (Cape Breton) region. UINR provides scholarships to students, opportunities for community members, and shows participants how their input makes a difference in the management of natural resources in their traditional area.

### **Self-sufficiency**

UINR is funded by successful proposal submissions to grantors for projects that will help the institute meet its objectives.

### **Environment**

UINR projects focus on watershed, marine and wildlife biology. The projects include an Aboriginal Aquatic Resource Management (AAROM) Strategy. UINR has also completed a GIS Mapping project identifying fish, shellfish and environmental features of Bras d'Or Lake. UINR also monitors shellfish harvesting sites in the lake.

## **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

Elder Albert Marshall recommends that communities take the best from both worlds and take a grassroots approach. Marshall indicates the need to see the world from two perspectives that will help to expand horizons.

Charlie Dennis, UINR, indicates, "It is important to develop a good management habit, to track all the projects on the go, and to make sure things are progressing in a timely manner". He advises, "Try to broaden the variety of work that is being done in the organization and look toward community issues".

Dennis also comments that communities need an academic institute to foster the importance of Traditional Knowledge in society. There is a need to develop a curriculum that embraces both traditional knowledge and scientific information to provide a unique and valuable perspective.

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Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources  
Eskasoni First Nation  
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**ECOSYSTEM-BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Sheshatshiu and Natuashish Nations are members of the Innu Nation. Sheshatshiu community is located 30 minutes northeast of Goose Bay in Labrador. The land occupied by the community of Sheshatshiu does not yet have reserve status. The Natuashish community site is located on the northern coast of Labrador and is accessible by airplane and boat.



The Goose Bay, Labrador area is referred to as Nitassinan and encompasses parts of the Innu traditional territory of Eastern Quebec and Labrador. The area lying in the Boreal forests ecozone is characterized by rugged, mountainous terrain with myriad watersheds, wetlands and both marine and freshwater ecosystems.

**Getting started**

Members of the Sheshatshiu Innu Nation were concerned about the logging practices and damage occurring to their traditionally used lands. In 1992, community members protested against the damage caused by conventional logging practices. Harvesting was stopped and the Innu Nation engaged in discussions with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador to develop an alternative path for management of the district.

The Innu Nation, consisting of representatives elected from both communities, had a vision that balanced the ecological, cultural and economic needs of the community. The vision was developed into the Forest Process Agreement, 2001, to regulate resource development of the Nitassinan region and to implement an Ecosystem-Based Planning approach. The plan was a sustainable forest management model that ensured the Nitassinan's region preservation for future generations while providing economic opportunities for the communities.

**Partnerships**

Innu Nation, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Department of Forestry signed the Forest Process Agreement. The agreement outlines the development of an Ecosystem-Based Forest Management Plan, the creation of resolutions for Interim Management Issues, and the development of a long-term Forest Management Agreement. The co-management plan covers 7.1 million hectares.

The Innu Nation Forest Office has contacts with organizations such as the Model Forest Network who helped to develop the Interim Forest Agreement. The Forest Guardian program has been working with universities to provide educational credits for the Guardian's training modules. Other organizations have contacted the office to partner in research opportunities and inventory the Nitassinan region.

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

Elders and leadership from the Innu communities participated in monthly meetings with the Innu Nation Forest Office while negotiations were occurring with the Province. Input and recommendations from members were vital in ensuring the agreement met the needs of the community.

Innu Nation Forest Office hires community members as Forest Guardians who work in the field directing the harvesting projects, flagging protected areas, and making sure protocol is followed. The Guardians also participate on expeditions with organizations conducting research and studies of the region.

**Funding**

Under the Forest Process Agreement the Innu Nation Forest Office receives \$520,000 to fund the three projects outlined in the agreement. Funding is also received from Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, private foundations, and universities conducting studies and research in the area. The funds cover salaries of the Forest Office staff, Forest Guardians, and part of the cost to complete research projects, studies, and inventory of the district.

**Business and Land Planning**

The Innu Nation Forest Office is working under a five-year operation plan. This plan outlines the annual allowable cut (AAC) for the area and the forestry operations directed by the office and Department of Forestry.

**Requirements**

The Forest Process Agreement is a contract in the form of a political agreement, which falls within the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador Forest Act. The forestry operations have to abide by guidelines set out by Federal

**Quick facts**

**Members of Innu Nation**

**Combined Total Population: 1,681**

**Service Centre:**  
**Goose Bay**

**Project Type:**  
**Forest Management**

**Operators:**  
**Innu Nation**

**Partnerships:**  
**Department of Forestry, Province of Newfoundland and Labrador**

and Provincial Governments. The Ecosystem-Based Management Plan also sets guidelines and protocol for operators to follow.

### **Obstacles / Barriers**

According to Valerie Courtois, Forest Technician of Innu Nation Forest Office, it has taken a long time to change the way things are being done. Many of the senior officials in the government were trained in older forestry techniques that resulted in tense discussions on the new methods being introduced in the Ecosystem-Based Forest Management Plan.

There were obstacles to accessing data on the Nitassinan region. The Innu Nation has to conduct and collect much of the base data themselves. Portions of the region, managed under the plan, are also not accessible by existing access roads increasing the cost of conducting research and harvesting timber products on these sites.

### **Expertise**

The members of the Innu Nation Forest Office are trained as Forest Technicians and Registered Professional Foresters (RPF). All are skilled in Forest Management Planning practice as well as in planning research projects. Training is required to use the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to record and create data for the mapping projects. Legal council is required to conduct negotiations and development of the Agreements between the community and government officials.

The Guardians, hired by Innu Nation, are knowledgeable of the local area. The program provides the technical training needed for conducting Ecological Assessments, GIS data collection, identification and flagging of sensitive areas. The Guardians are trained to identify sensitive ecological habitats, and culturally and environmentally significant sites for protection. Part of their responsibility is to monitor harvesting operators to ensure they follow guidelines set out by the management plan for the protection of these areas.

### **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions**

#### **Community culture and traditions**

The Forest Process Agreement was developed to include the Innu community in the day-to-day operations of the projects occurring in the district. The Ecosystem-Based Forest Management Plan outlines a responsibility to maintain the cultural beliefs and values of the Innu people. A Cultural Protected Area Network was developed to consider themes important to the community. Guidelines were developed to prevent damage that could compromise the ability of the people to use the region to meet cultural needs. Elders provide an Innu perspective and knowledge to the projects and give input into the training modules developed for the Guardians.

### **Community healing**

The Forest Guardian program provides local individuals the opportunity to use their Traditional Knowledge of Nitassinan region and the chance to learn about forest management and planning. The hope is to have skills transferred back into the community and raise capacity for greater involvement in future forest stewardship.

### **Self-sufficiency**

The Innu Nation has taken on a responsibility to provide economic development opportunities to the community. The sale of resources and timber extracted from the managed district provide the Innu Nation with the resources to complete research projects and future development plans for the region.

### **Environment**

The first priority of the Management Plan is the protection of the ecological functions of the Nitassinan region. An "Ecological Protected Area Network" was designed for the development zones, which uses three planning scales: Landscape, Watershed, and Stand. Harvesting areas are identified only after environmental and cultural features are outlined and catalogued. Great care and consideration is taken to identify water systems, sensitive or endangered animal species, rare habitats, trails and corridors. Buffer areas are then placed around these designated areas and protected from development.

### **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

Valerie Courtois, Forest Ecosystem Planning Analyst from the Innu Nation Forest Office, reports that it is important to "get going", lead the process, and use an innovative approach to get things done. "Raise your voice" and don't be afraid to ask for what you want." Courtois indicates, "If you accept what is given to you, that is all you will get."

Decide what the needs are for the community, and use all available resources to provide solutions. When office staff members travel to conferences they request that a community member also attend. The goal is to tell the story. Take pictures and show them at these events. According to Courtois, funding sources and connections can be found this way.

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Forest Office, Innu Nation  
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**COMMUNITY ENERGY PLAN**

Wha Ti is located 104 km by air northeast of Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories. The community is situated on the edge of Lac La Martre. Access to the remote community is by winter road, from February to April, or by air transportation.

**Getting started – Energy Consumption and Diesel Generation**

Energy in the community of Wha Ti is produced using a diesel generator situated in the middle of the community. Health concerns, high energy bills, and pollution of the surrounding land prompted the community to investigate alternative energy production methods. A partnership with Ecology North, an NWT non-government environmental group, provided an avenue for the community to develop solutions for the issues surrounding the diesel generator. The community took a “Can Do” attitude in finding solutions to the problems impacting the health and well-being of the community members, the community land and surrounding environment.

**Partnerships**

Ecology North developed the proposal to create a model of ecological sustainability for northern communities. Based on their experience and discussions with the Government of the Northwest Territories’ Energy Secretariat, Ecology North identified possible First Nation communities as potential partners. Ecology North was looking for a community that was healthy, had a stable governing structure, and was interested in working on energy related issues. Wha Ti First Nation was selected as a partner due to the issues surrounding diesel generated electricity and past investigations into alternative energy production.

Along with Ecology North, the Charter Community of Wha Ti, and the Wha Ti Nation, partnerships were created with the Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development, Arctic Energy Alliance, and Energy Secretariat, Government of Northwest Territories. Partnering with these organizations provided Ecology North and Wha Ti Nation access to a range of knowledge, information sources, and resources. The partners provided workshops and training sessions and attended meetings in the community to answer questions on the many aspects of ecological sustainability.



**Quick facts**

**Total Population: 516**

**Closest City Centre: Yellowknife**

**Project Type: Community Energy Plan**

**Operators: Wha Ti Nation**

**Partnerships: Ecology North, Charter Community of Wha Ti, As well as, Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development, Arctic Energy Alliance**

**Community and Leadership Involvement**

Community involvement was a major component of the project. Members were involved in the planning, research, and evaluation of the data. Community meetings were held, allowing participation by all interested people. An Elder’s Advisory group was developed to provide input and guidance for the project pathway. Every building in the community was included in an energy audit, facilitated by a Youth Action Group organized to conduct research. A community coordinator, Sonny Zoe, a Wha Ti Nation member, was hired to work on the project. Zoe acted as a liaison between the partners, Ecology North, Elders and Youth Groups, Chief and Council, and community members. Wha Ti Nation Chief and Council supported the project and research being conducted by their members.

**Funding**

Ecology North secured funding for the project from government and non-government sources. Support was sought from Environment Canada’s EcoAction Fund, INAC’s Northern Climate Change Program, and the Youth Services Initiative, as well as from the Government of NWT.

**Obstacles / Barriers**

The project is dealing with human behaviour, and requires follow-up work to ensure that the new energy saving techniques are being applied throughout the community. The coordinator would like to have the funding and time to repeat the individual home visits to follow-up the work previously completed by the youth committee.

Wha Ti is a traditional community where the primary language for communication is Dogrib. Translators are used to communicate with the elders in the community. The translators were required to invent new terms to describe the innovative systems and materials associated with alternative energy generation.

There was an issue of accessing the funding to provide financing for the upfront cost of the study and plan. Tracking and reporting for the various federal funding sources detracted from the project. Each division required a separate and different accounting procedure and detailing of all in-kind donations, and other sources of funding. These various formats required extra time from the project team to complete and submit.

The youth action group included in the project provided a learning experience for the project coordinators. The program ran for ten of the twelve months it was designed for. There was a high turn over rate of participants due to personal issues and situations at home. The project coordinators would choose to use younger youth for the project if it were to be repeated.

### **Expertise**

Technical expertise was required to put together the proposal and work with the community to research and conduct energy audits on community members' homes. The partnering organizations conducted training and information sessions to help develop the Community Energy Plan. Ecology North was able to facilitate the community meeting process and outlined the project pathway, based on the ideas generated by community members.

Capacity building for the community coordinator was required to handle project planning and implementation skills to ensure progress was maintained. The coordinator was asked to use computer programs, write proposals, plan and chair community meetings, present the community energy plan, and speak with the public and media about the project.

### **Future goals**

The Wha Ti Community Energy Plan lists a number of recommendations for the community that could be addressed through feasibility studies. Out of these recommendations Wha Ti has chosen to research a "Run-of-the-River" hydro development project. Grants from INAC's Aboriginal and Northern Community Action Program (ANCAP) and from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Green Enabling Fund are allowing completion of a business plan and final feasibility studies for the hydro project. Sonny Zoe, the community coordinator, and Arctic Energy Alliance are in the process of developing proposals to implement many of the other energy efficient strategies recommended.

### **Community Sustainability: Linkages & Contributions Community culture and traditions**

The Community Energy Plan involved every household and building in the community. The Youth Action Group conducted energy audits on each household and provided the families with techniques to reduce energy bills. Many of the house visits were conducted using the traditional language of the community. Workshops were given to the youth on building life skills and enhancing cultural roots, and were sponsored by and included participation of Elders, healers, counsellors, and nutritionists.

The use of a translator was important in the ability to communicate with community members who spoke only Dogrib. The program brought the young and old together.

### **Community healing**

The community of Wha Ti was concerned about the effects diesel generated energy was having on their members' health and well being. Fumes from the generator polluted the air, their clothing, the outdoor processing of animal and meat products, and were absorbed by their bodies. The Community Energy Plan provided alternative ideas of energy production that are less harmful to the health of community members, and reduced their dependence on diesel power.

### **Self-sufficiency**

The Community Energy Plan provides recommendations and techniques for the reduction of energy consumed by community members. A significant reduction in overall energy use would enable the community to consider alternative energy generation projects that provide lower energy output. These options would reduce the expense and dependency on fuel trucked into the community, while providing for local economic development that would circulate dollars within the community instead of exporting them away.

### **Environment**

The Community Energy Plan focuses on the amount of energy consumed by community members. A reduction in the use of energy will enable the community to reduce dependence on the generator and the eventual removal of the system from the centre of the community.

### **Messages to Other First Nations Communities**

According to Bob Bromley of Ecology North, this work involves a number of elements that depend on the community's desire and ability to participate in the project and implement the recommendations raised in the report. The project approach needs to be holistic, capturing all the groups of the community.

Sonny Zoe has recommendations to other coordinators. "[You] have to keep pushing. Do everything in your power to keep going." Zoe thought about the future, the kids, and doing everything the right way. He would pick out the good information that was provided to him and would try to get it out to the community

Overall, nothing was done in haste. The community has been thinking about these issues for some time. Wha Ti wants to support and work with their neighbours, to share the information that they have learned.

Contact Information:  
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Wha Ti Nation  
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