



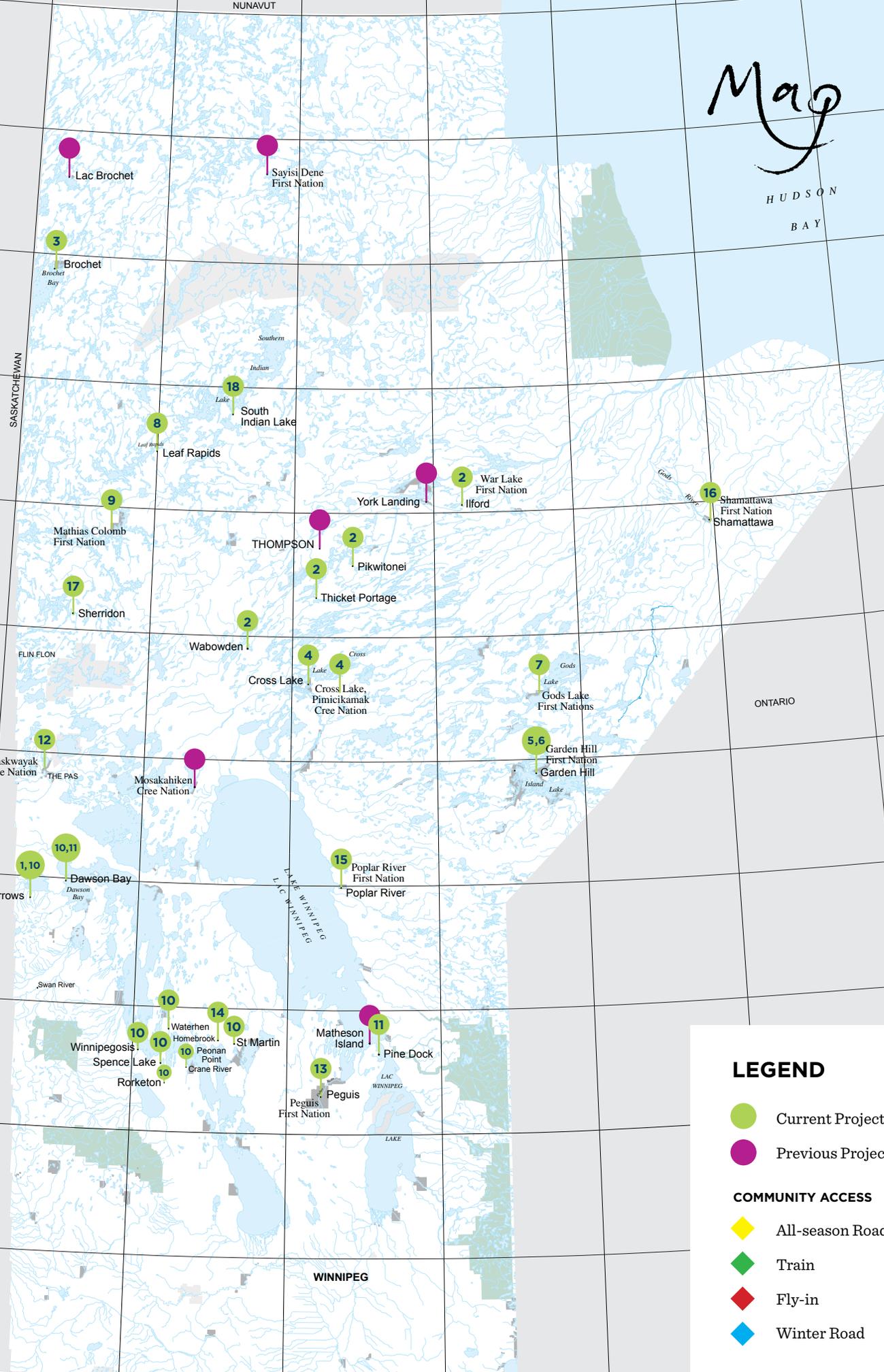
community
STORIES

- 2016 -



Map

HUDSON
BAY



LEGEND

- Current Projects
- Previous Projects

COMMUNITY ACCESS

- ◆ All-season Road
- ◆ Train
- ◆ Fly-in
- ◆ Winter Road

N.W.T.

NUNAVUT

SASKATCHEWAN

FLIN FLON

Opaskwayak Cree Nation

Barrows

Winnipegosis

Spence Lake

Rorketon

Waterhen

Homebrook

Peonan Point

Grane River

Lac Brochet

Brochet

Leaf Rapids

Mathias Colomb First Nation

Sherridon

Mosakahiken Cree Nation

Dawson Bay

Winnipegosis

Spence Lake

Rorketon

Waterhen

Homebrook

Peonan Point

Grane River

St Martin

Matheson Island

Pine Dock

Peguis First Nation

Sayisi Dene First Nation

South Indian Lake

Leaf Rapids

THOMPSON

Wabowden

Cross Lake

Cross Lake, Pimicikamak Cree Nation

Poplar River First Nation

Matheson Island

Pine Dock

Peguis First Nation

York Landing

Ilford

Pikwitonei

Thicket Portage

Gods Lake

Gods Lake First Nations

Garden Hill First Nation

Garden Hill

War Lake First Nation

Shamattawa First Nation

Shamattawa

Gods Lake

Gods Lake First Nations

Garden Hill First Nation

Garden Hill

Poplar River First Nation

Poplar River

Matheson Island

Pine Dock

Peguis First Nation

York Landing

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Garden Hill First Nation

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Poplar River First Nation

Poplar River

Matheson Island

Pine Dock

Peguis First Nation

York Landing

Ilford

Pikwitonei

Thicket Portage

Gods Lake

Gods Lake First Nations

Garden Hill First Nation

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War Lake First Nation

Shamattawa First Nation

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Garden Hill First Nation

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Garden Hill First Nation

Garden Hill

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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ON THE COVER:

[LEFT TO RIGHT] Bonny Dumas's Son helps with beekeeping, Cassandra Bighetty of Brochet rototilling the Leaf Rapids garden, Neil Bakker and his sugar snap peas, Carol Sanoffsky of Wabowden



welcome

SHARING THE STORIES

Welcome to this inspiring collection of stories about Northern communities taking action! We hope you enjoy it and gain ideas, inspiration, and a sense of the possible. Each community takes action in their own way and have their own visions for healthy, strong communities. Cultural reclamation & resurgence, youth skill and leadership development, food sovereignty, social enterprise, community economic development, intergenerational exchange, improved health and community wellness are part of visions for healthy, strong futures.

The purpose of this booklet is to share the good news stories. People are proud of their efforts and want to share with neighbours, family and friends what is possible. Each story in this booklet has been co-created by the NMFCCC staff and the project leaders, and project leaders have the final review. Nothing appears in this booklet without permission. Communities receive paper and electronic copies for their own purposes and for sharing with others. NMFCCC does not take any ownership of these stories, they are not ours! Please offer respect and ask permission from the community project leaders if you wish to use the stories in other publications or projects.

Thank you to the many Nations and communities who have partnered with us and welcomed us on your journeys of community strengthening. We are happy to walk with you and thankful for what you have shared in return.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

From time immemorial, the people who live in northern Manitoba have fed, clothed and sustained themselves using gifts from the land. Their lives were changed irrevocably with the colonization of Canada and the assumption of 'guardianship' over indigenous peoples by the Federal Government. For many years the government tried to remake the people of the north into their version of 'civilized society'. Children were taken from their families and sustaining practices were outlawed or legislated. Resource extraction changed and damaged the lands and waters. The result is that people have become more sedentary and skills are not practiced or shared as they once were. People are primarily dependent on food shipped from the south, which is often too expensive for families to afford.

But, as shown in this community stories, people are reclaiming their power, relearning traditional ways, building up new local food solutions and new local economies. Farms, wild food programs, bee apiaries, fishing co-operatives, and gardens and greenhouses are just some of the ways that Northerners are using food to grow and help heal their communities.

THE COLLABORATIVE

The Northern Manitoba Food, Culture, and Community Collaborative (NMFCCC) began in 2013 in response to the requests of northern community members. Northerners wanted partners who work relationally, who visit, listen to the community needs, and value reciprocity.

Philanthropic organizations wanted to help create deeper impact, share learning, and share the risk and rewards of partnering with remote northern communities.

Now governments, foundations, and support organizations work with community people (Northern Advisors) as the NMFCCC. Tides Canada is proud to lead, host, and fund the Collaborative.

our values

RECIPROCITY:

Mutual respect for what each collaborator has to give and giving in return

SHARED LEARNING:

Growing in understanding and capacities when giving and receiving wisdom

COLLABORATIVE:

Working in partnership and strengthening our potential by pooling resources, knowledge, networks, and ideas

SLOW:

Recognizing that slow but steady pacing will allow communities and their local infrastructure to heal and evolve in a sustainable and rooted way

RELATIONAL:

Approaching the work in an interpersonal way and developing relationships through conversations, personal visits, story sharing, and personal exchange

COMMITTED:

Committing support in a dependable and steadfast way, including through grants, networking, problem solving, friendship, story-sharing, and more

NMFCCC Goal: *Communities in northern Manitoba are healthier and stronger, and our partnerships are mutually transformative.*



BARROWS:

Community Greenhouse

The Barrows Community Greenhouse is 10ft x 30ft and was established in 2013 through a grant from Manitoba Agriculture. The greenhouse is owned and managed by the Barrows Community Council, though originally we wanted a community member to take on the project as a private enterprise.

The project has grown into a centerpiece for our community. It's where some community members gain employment, where people take workshops to learn how to garden and cook, and where others volunteer their time to help out. The greenhouse beautifies our school and cemetery. It hosts workshops around food, stimulates recipe exchanges, and brings customers into the community. The market for our greenhouse plants has increased every year with more demand from people outside our local area. People are happy with the plants we raise and some have even suggested we raise our prices. We try to keep the price low to encourage healthy eating.

You can see change taking place in Barrows. Over the last four years every household that wasn't already growing food in our community has taken up gardening on some level. From large backyard plots bigger than an acre, to smaller raised beds or pots of tomatoes, everyone is growing something.

As part of this project we planted fruit trees and berry bushes throughout the community and they are really starting to produce! Grape vines, apple and

cherry trees are yielding good amounts of fruit. Haskap, strawberries and raspberries bushes are yielding enough for snacking and jam-making.

Everyone is getting involved. Before it was the older people in the community and now even the younger people are doing things and getting involved. The kids come to the greenhouse with their parents and grandparents and they help in the gardens.

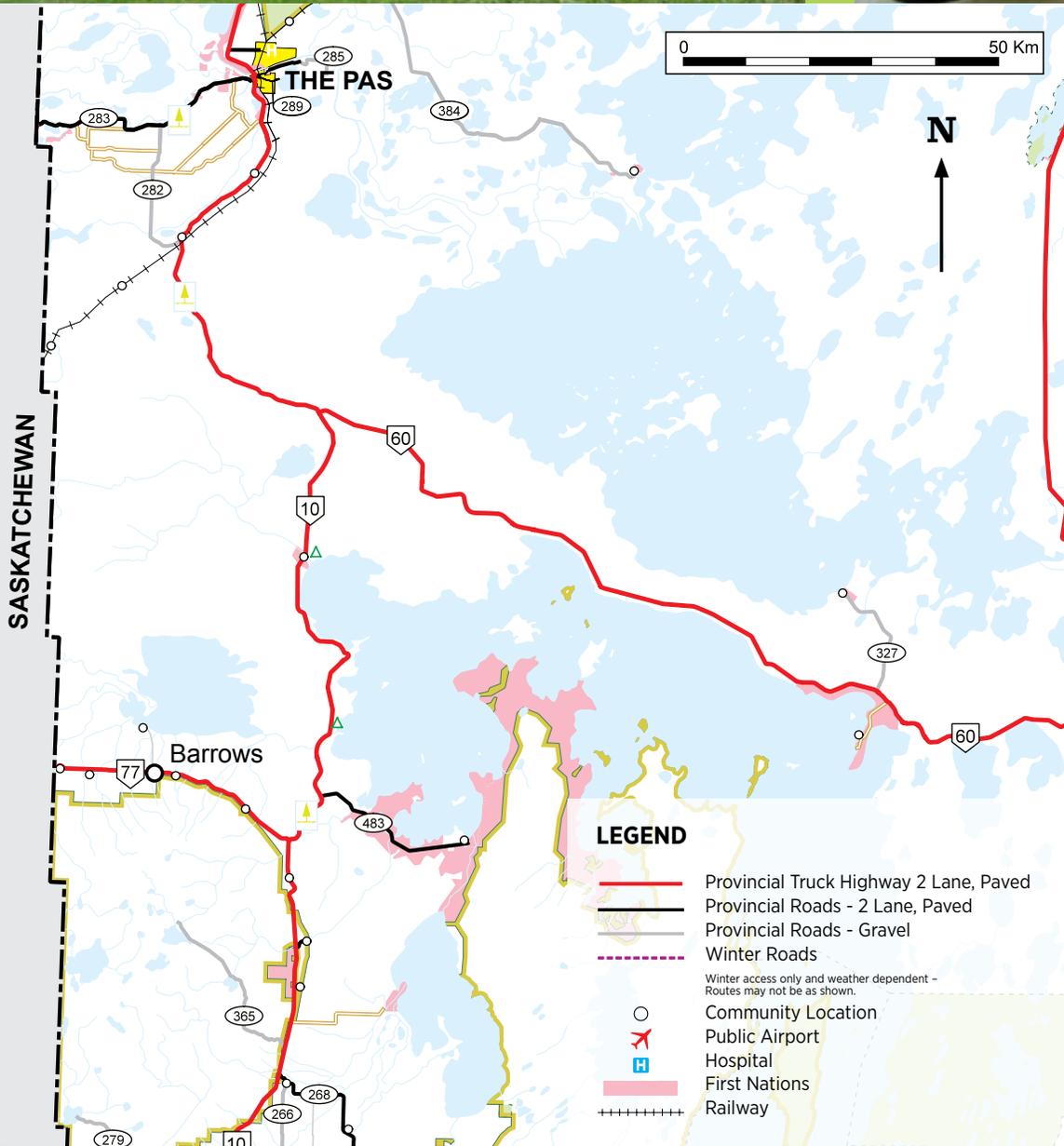
We have had some challenges learning to operate a greenhouse and knowing which systems needed to be improved. Since starting, we have added better fans for improved airflow, added a wood stove to keep it warm during colder nights, and improved our watering systems. We've also recognised it's important to support and train our staff properly so that the plants grow well and we don't have losses. These things take time to figure out. The cost of food is high in our community and there are health challenges, so it's worth it to stick to our project and make it stronger and stronger. Next year we hope to take our plants to farmers markets if we have extra, and to get more young people involved. We hope to keep this greenhouse going for a long time.

From Sherry Ferland, Barrows CAO:
"The main thing I have noticed is that we have more ideas being shared in the community and more people are preserving, canning and smoking foods. If someone has a good recipe, it gets passed around the community and everyone tries it. People are smoking fish, making soup, making salsa and pickles. Almost everyone is doing something. People are finding out what they like. For example, this year we didn't order and grow cantaloupe because we didn't think there was a demand for it. Then people were really looking for it in the greenhouse and disappointed that it wasn't there. I will be sure to order them this year!"





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**NFMCCC
funding**

- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

Bring people together, promote healthy eating habits, make training opportunities and plants available locally and provide community employment opportunities.

> LOCATION

The community of Barrows is located near the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border, 90 minutes south of The Pas and an hour north of Swan River. The population is approximately 100 people. Barrows is the local service centre for many smaller communities.

> PHOTO DETAILS

- [1] Seedlings under indoor grow lights.
- [2] Seedlings in greenhouse.
- [3] Jim Woods with his grandchildren in Barrows.
- [4] New garden 2016 Barrows.
- [5] Barrows Cooking Canning Workshop.
- [6] Daniel Bemet in Barrows greenhouse.

“ Our greenhouse is a project that is benefiting the community in more ways than I first imagined. ”
 – Sherry Ferland, Barrows CAO



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WABOWDEN, THICKET PORTAGE, PIKWITONEI, ILFORD & WAR LAKE FIRST NATION:

Bayline Food Buying Co-op

The Bayline Food Buying Co-op was first thought of in 2012. Most communities along the Bayline (rail line) do not have year-round road access or local grocery stores. They have to travel by train, boat, or winter road to do their grocery shopping and this is very expensive. A food buying co-op will provide a regular shipment of pre-ordered foods to community members in partnership with Via Rail. It will reduce the time and money involved in grocery shopping and accessing good foods.

Since the project started there has been lots of work done, including a pre-feasibility study and many meetings. The project is spearheaded by Carol Sanoffsky as part of her role as Administrator for the Bayline Regional Round Table, but many other community leaders and members are helping with the work.

We started out in 2016 with community surveys to find out which types of food people would want to get, to learn about people's interest and understanding of the food buying program and to get suggestions on how to run the program. The community champions in Thicket Portage and Pikwitonei, Marie Brightnose and Pauline

Cordell, led the survey work and we learned a lot to help guide the program planning.

We have made partnerships with many organizations that are helping us to get the program off the ground. Just a few are the community councils of Thicket Portage, Pikwitonei and Iford, War Lake First Nation Chief and Council, VIA Rail, Frontier School Division and Dwyer's Store in Wabowden.

We talked to people from the Fort Albany Food Security Committee who help run a fresh food market in Fort Albany on the James Bay coast. They have worked through challenges and are making the market work. For awhile they had to ship food by truck, to a train and to a plane to get the food from Toronto to Fort Albany, but now they source their food from Thunder Bay which cuts down the transit time considerably. They had a lot of good insights to share with us about the logistics of running a food buying group and potential challenges we might face.

We also visited a group of Manitoba farmers who sell and package their meat or produce to sell directly to consumers. On

the trip we got some good ideas about how to organize the orders and package the food for each 'customer'.

With all the work going into getting the co-op up and running we brought on Donna Sanoffsky as the Wabowden-based coordinator to help support community champions and to coordinate the program start. Donna has done loads of work organizing even more meetings, visiting the communities to share information, getting all the paperwork sorted out for starting the program and purchasing equipment we will need when we start.

We took huge steps forward in 2016 and are almost ready to start our first shipment. Our final step before we kick-off the program is holding a training session for all the community champions in Thompson so they can get more familiar with the ordering and order checking processes.



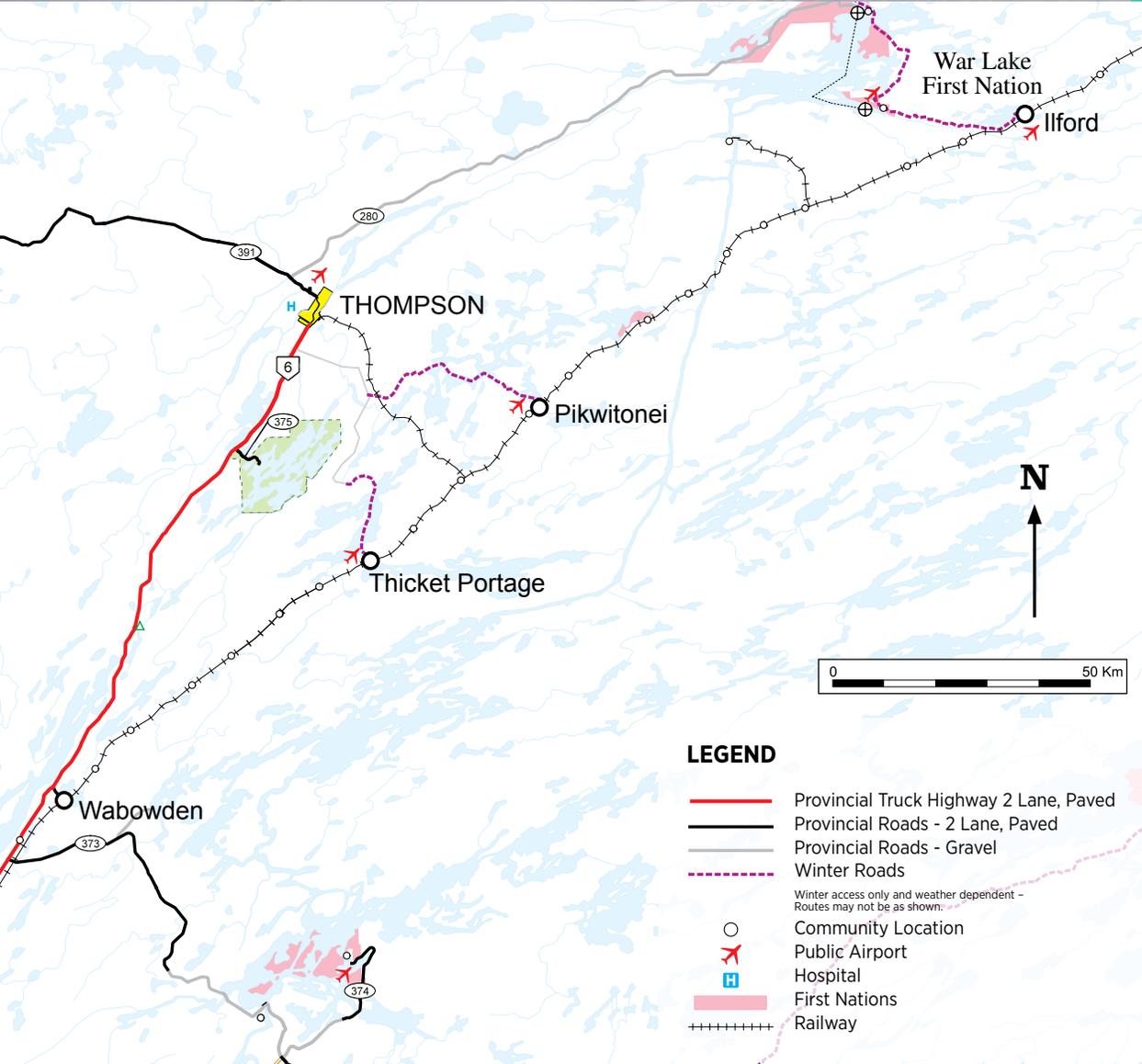


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ORDER WEEK



4



NFMCCC funding

- 2015
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To increase access to healthy foods, decrease the cost of accessing food, and to make the communities stronger.

> LOCATION

The communities of Wabowden, Thicket Portage, Pikwitonei, Ilford and War Lake First Nation are located along the Hudson's Bay Railway. Wabowden is located 111 km southwest of Thompson on Highway 6. Thicket Portage, Pikwitonei, Ilford and War Lake First Nation are not serviced by all season roads but are connected to Thompson by the railway.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Pauline, Leann, Joanne, Jennell, Marie and Carol at Social Enterprise workshop in Thompson. [2] Train Station in Ilford/War Lake First Nation. [3] Panorama of Ilford/War Lake First Nation. [4] Bayline Food Buying Co-op Banner [5] Carol, Danny and Becky on trip to Harvest Moon Local Food Initiative in Cypress River.

“ *This will be good for our community.*
- Pikwitonei Community Member

We will save a lot of money if it is started.
- Thicket Portage Community Member

This will be good, it will benefit the elders and children. ”
- Thicket Portage Community Member



BARREN LANDS FIRST NATION / BROCHET: Youth Garden Project

People have been growing their own gardens in Brochet for a long time, but our gardening project expanded in 2013 under the direction and management of our health center and with the support of external partners, and it has been growing ever since.

The cost of food in Brochet is very high. Some subsidies are in place, but things are still very expensive. A 4-L jug of milk is \$14.95, while a 10-pound bag of potatoes is \$33.

Also, we need positive things for our youth to do, and ways for them to gain employment and learn how to be leaders in our community. Our garden project helps to address these challenges. In 2013, we built a 14' x 20' greenhouse at the community garden site and also started a fruit patch. Out of the success and interest from 2013, we applied for additional support from the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture & Community Collaborative to expand this great work.

To get better at gardening, our youth have travelled to Leaf Rapids to learn with experienced boreal horticulturalist Chuck Stensgard. Youth from Leaf Rapids have

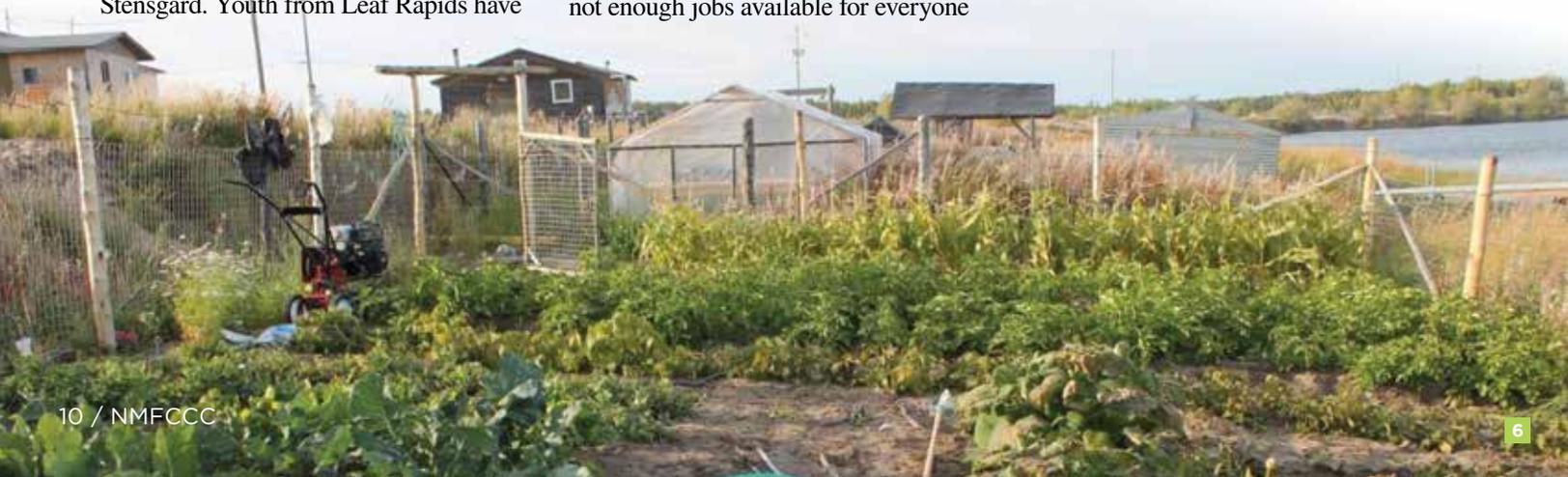
also traveled to our community to help us build new garden beds and improve the soil. We have also received seeds and strawberry plants from Leaf Rapids that are adapted to be strong in our northern climates. Developing the soil and getting the right equipment to move soil to our gardens have been challenges for us to work on. Sometimes the Northern Stores saves rotten fruit for us to add to the soil.

The workers at our garden (usually 5-7 youth and 1-2 adults) plant and maintain the main garden, as well as visit people's homes and help them build their own home gardens (in-ground and raised beds). Since we started we have doubled the size of the community garden. There is a positive impact for those employed. For the youth, it gives increased job skills, garden training, confidence about their ability to contribute to their community, as well as some spending money. For the adults involved, the money supplements the high costs of food to feed their families and helps them gain confidence in gardening skills. There are lots of young people that would like to work in the garden but not enough jobs available for everyone

interested. It's sad turning people away but we always invite people interested to join us by volunteering in the garden.

The interest in the project has increased because the community has celebrated the work and accomplishments. Food produced is shared through the Elder's lunch, youth cooking classes, and local food boxes distributed to Elders. These connections all contribute to the strengthening of the belief that delicious, healthy food could be grown in the community.

Gardening has become a huge part of our community and has brought the people closer. A growing number of people have stopped by the community garden to see how everything has been going and they are really shocked and excited about the results. Some community members have even come to lend a hand to the garden advisors. Having a garden in Brochet helps with saving money and allows people to purchase other things that we can't grow. Because of the garden, people are cooking healthier and getting exercise, because having a garden is a lot of work but also worth it.

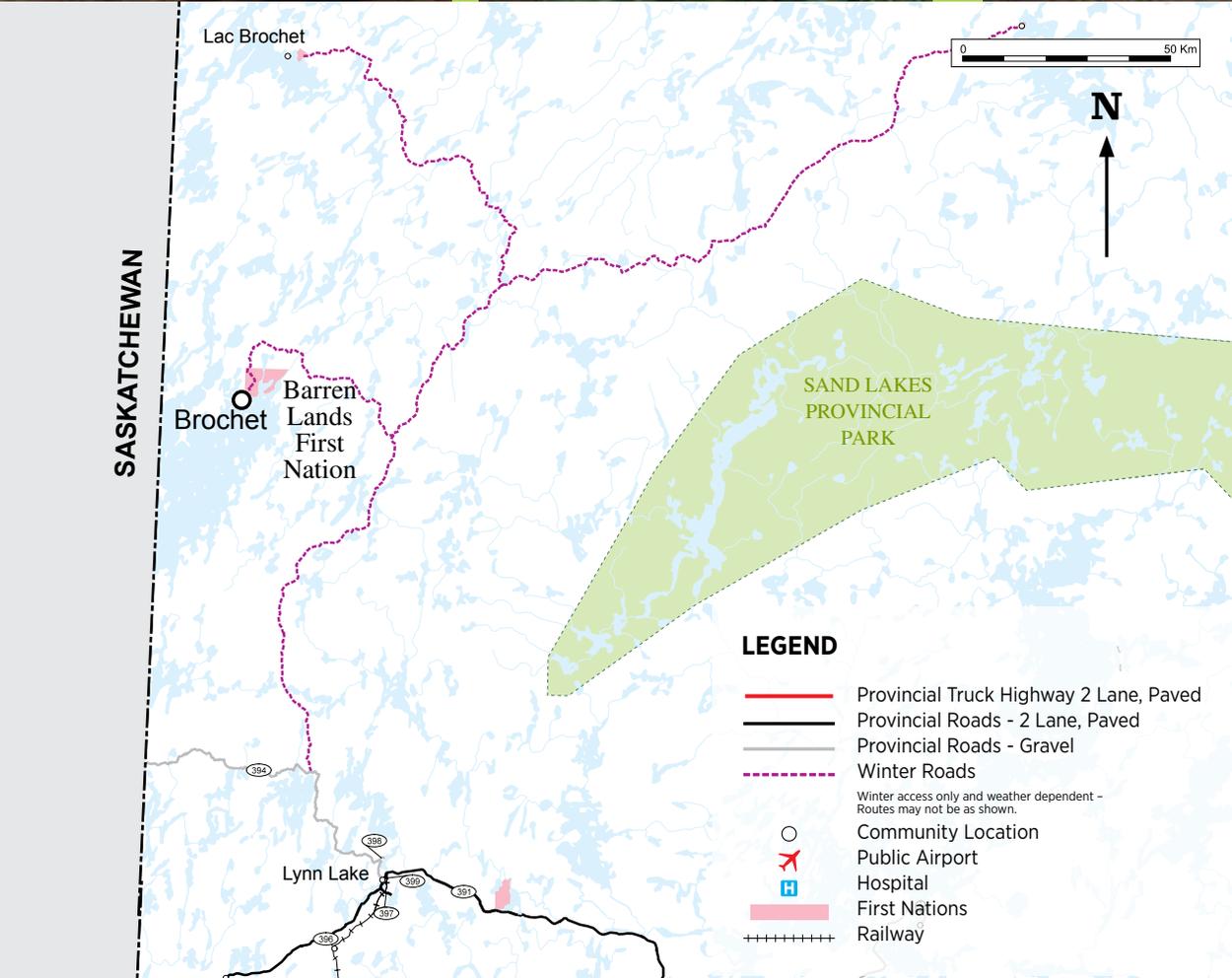




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**NFMCCC
funding**

- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To grow good food in the community, build cooking skills, and to create positive employment options and training for youth.

> LOCATION

The Barren Lands First Nation and Brochet Community are two of the most northern communities in Manitoba, situated on the northern shore of Reindeer Lake. The community is 928 kilometers north of Winnipeg and 19 kilometers east of the Saskatchewan border, with a total population of 619 people.

> PHOTO DETAILS

- [1] Brochet family by their home garden.
- [2] Brochet crew practicing ground development.
- [3] Grace tilling soil in Brochet.
- [4] Malcolm (grade 9 in this photo) and his monster northern cabbage.
- [5] Garden crew from left: Logan Mersaty, Josh Bighetty, Cassandra Bighetty, Rachelle Bighetty, Alanna Disbrowe and Malcom Disbrowe.
- [6] Large garden in Brochet.

“ They (youth workers) cooked with local onions, potatoes, cabbage, and carrots to make a delicious cabbage salad and potato latkes. The fifteen youth and five adults who cooked and ate the food that day were amazed that it had all been grown a stone’s throw from the school grounds.

- Chloe Donatelli, former Food Matters Manitoba staff.

The garden project has create meaningful job opportunities for the young people in the community. They are looked up to as role models and it builds their confidence.

- Cassandra Bighetty, community organizer



PIMICIKAMAK CREE NATION / CROSS LAKE: Garden & Cooking Project

The gardens in ‘the Bronx’ neighborhood of Cross Lake were established in 2012 by community members to create a positive space, build new skills and grow healthy foods. The Mikisew School took a lead role in creating these gardens and we hoped that they would be a place where the students who attend Mikisew School Garden Club could build their skills and then use them at home in their own gardens. There are 10 garden beds for students and community members to use.

The cooking component was added in 2016 to provide families with the opportunity to learn how to cook healthy meals that are diabetic friendly and promote food traditions of Cross Lake. Local Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative workers manage the cooking classes. Food Matters Manitoba plays a supportive role in both the garden and cooking classes.

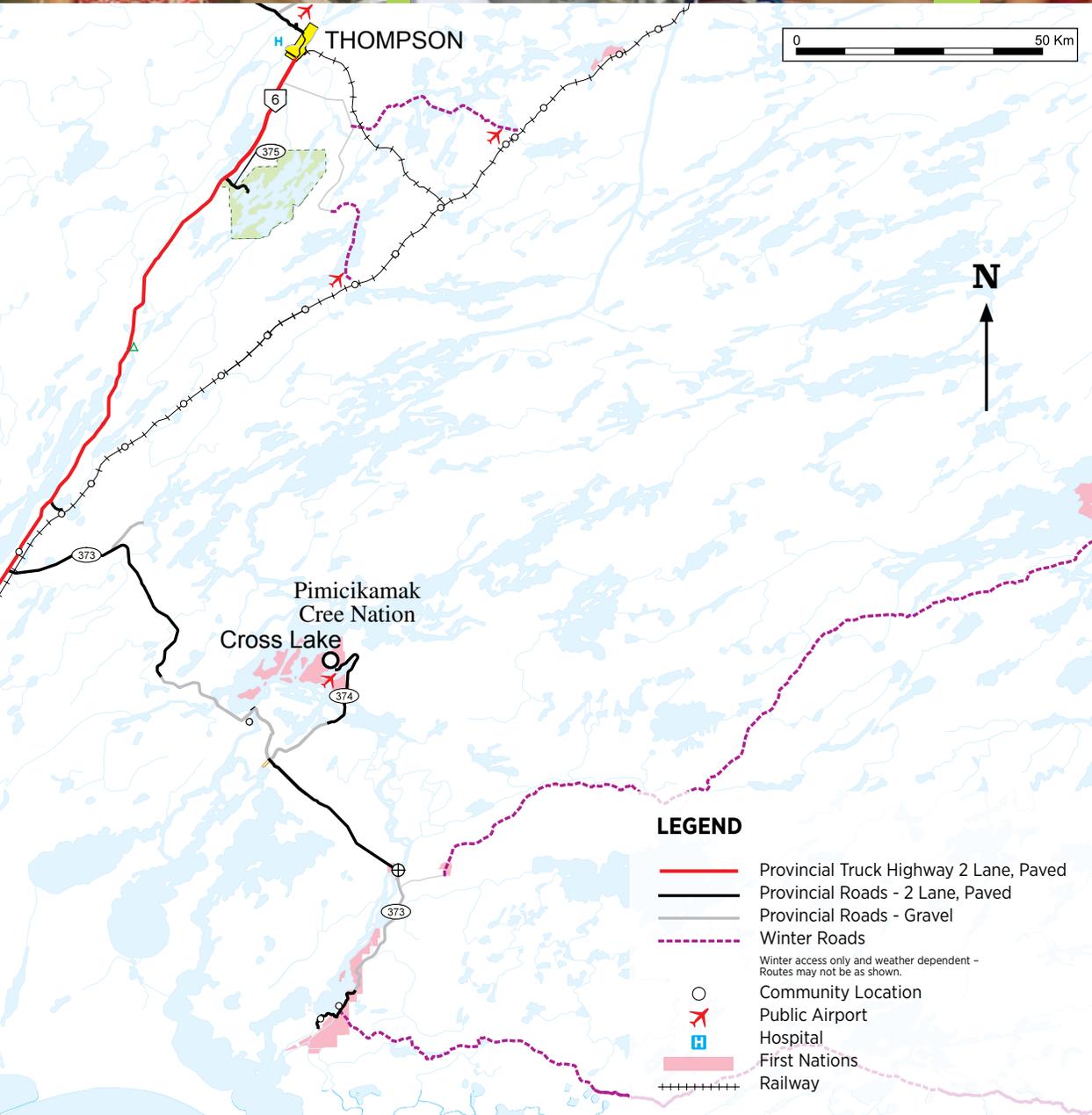
For the garden, it has been difficult to find adults who have gardening skills and will spend time (either paid or volunteer) to consistently help organize and run the gardens. The children love to come out on planting days and to see how the food is growing, but we need more help and organization to do the weeding and watering for the garden to grow really well. There is so much value in getting outside together and getting our hands dirty.

In 2016, Carol Blair, a local lunch program volunteer at Mikesew School, helped organize the garden. Carol is a long time gardener in the community and lives directly across from the community garden space. Carol, her son Marcus, and community member and volunteer Frank prepared the planting space. Carol and Marcus then took the lead of planting vegetable seeds with children from around the area. It was a rainy summer which lead to some delays in getting the seeds in the ground. Each volunteer was paid an honorarium throughout the summer for their contribution to the project. Scheduling and organizing continues to be one of the most challenging aspects of the garden, as well as regular access to tools and supplies.

The cooking classes are offered through the Cross Lake Health Centre and Prenatal Nutrition Program. Twice a month, Wendy and Sonia from the health centre host cooking classes for local mothers and children. Local food champion Donna Hoppener volunteers with the program by providing a variety of different diabetes friendly recipes and helping during the classes. These classes are popular and we plan to do more of them. We would also like to incorporate more traditional foods and food from the land into our cooking.

Terr-lyn and Noretta cooking pizza together





**NFMCCC
funding**

- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

Create positive spaces, build new skills, and grow then eat healthy foods.

> LOCATION

Cross Lake or Pimicikamak First Nation is located north of Lake Winnipeg. It has an on-reserve population of 5,385. It has year-round road access.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Local youth learning about gardening. [2] Patricia and Marilyn. [3] Sherolyn. [4] Maria and her baby. [5] Patricia and Marilyn. [6] Clara and Charlize. [7] Terr-lyn and Noretta cooking pizza together. [8] Cooking class participants.





GARDEN HILL FIRST NATION: Meechim Farm

Started in 2015, The Meechim Project is an integrated social enterprise food security project based in Garden Hill First Nation. The project consists of a farm, food market, agriculture-based training, and educational programming focused on teaching children about growing food and healthy eating referred to as “School-to-Farm”. It was designed with the intention of changing the local food system to create a healthy long-lasting impact for the community. The Meechim Project aims to resolve the lack of healthy affordable food options as well as increase employment and training opportunities for the local community.

The first year was tough to grow vegetables because of the quality of the soil. In 2016, we improved our crop growing and poultry operations. We grew over a dozen varieties of fruits and vegetables and increased the amount grown. We planted 139 rows of crops and hand-sowed 6 plots throughout the farm, improving on our acreage usage. Adding fish to the soil for fertilizer had a wonderful effect. Our plants were healthy and our yields were impressive. We will add fish again next year!

In 2016, we also constructed a hen barn. 400 broiler chicks were flown up and 90% survived to processing. Birds were prepped, packaged into sealed plastic, and quickly frozen. These chickens were then sold to the community. As well, we had 12 layer hens producing 18 eggs per

week. The eggs are given to workers at the end of the week.

In 2016, 8 full-time workers and 1 full-time supervisor from the local community staffed the farm. They worked from June 6th until October 28th for a total of 7,920 man-hours. Our manager, Robert Guilford, is a farmer from southern Manitoba. Robert spent 10-11 days at a time living and working at the farm guiding and instructing from May to September. Robert’s role is to build the skills of the local people to the point where they can take over the farm fully.

This year past we increased the community presence on the farm. With our hen barn containing two outdoor coops, local families were consistently coming to visit during early afternoon and evenings to see the operation. Children were curious about the chickens watching them from outside the fencing. When we were done processing the chickens, the farm’s workers, supervisor, manager, their friends and families held a feast at the farm to celebrate a successful season. Local people are increasingly becoming more aware of the farm and what it has to offer to the community.

Since this was only our second year of farm operations in Garden Hill, it was not without challenges. Flights to travel and support people in Garden Hill are expensive and inconsistent and there isn’t a good place to stay. We intend

to build a residence so that people can come and participate in our northern farm school in 2017. Communication would be improved if we had a phone at the farm. We are trying to make good relationships with the Garden Hill Chief and Council, but they are busy people. Finally, an all-season employee to monitor and secure the farm would really be helpful because the farm is vulnerable to vandalism or theft when left unattended for long periods.

While it can be challenging, we are still committed to ensuring this project continues forward. Over the next year or two, we are planning again to improve on our operation in Garden Hill. We will expand the growing area, build living quarters for support people and farm school students, keep improving our soil, create a seed storage area, start the farm school, and strengthen our farm to school program. There is lots to do!

We surveyed community members about the farm and their responses were motivating. 100% of people tell their friends and family about the farm and felt that it was either ‘very important’ or ‘extremely important’ to the community. Also, 100% of people we talked to had eaten something (egg, meat or veg) raised at the farm. Our motivations to support and grow this project come from the community. One member said simply “Keep it going... strong.”



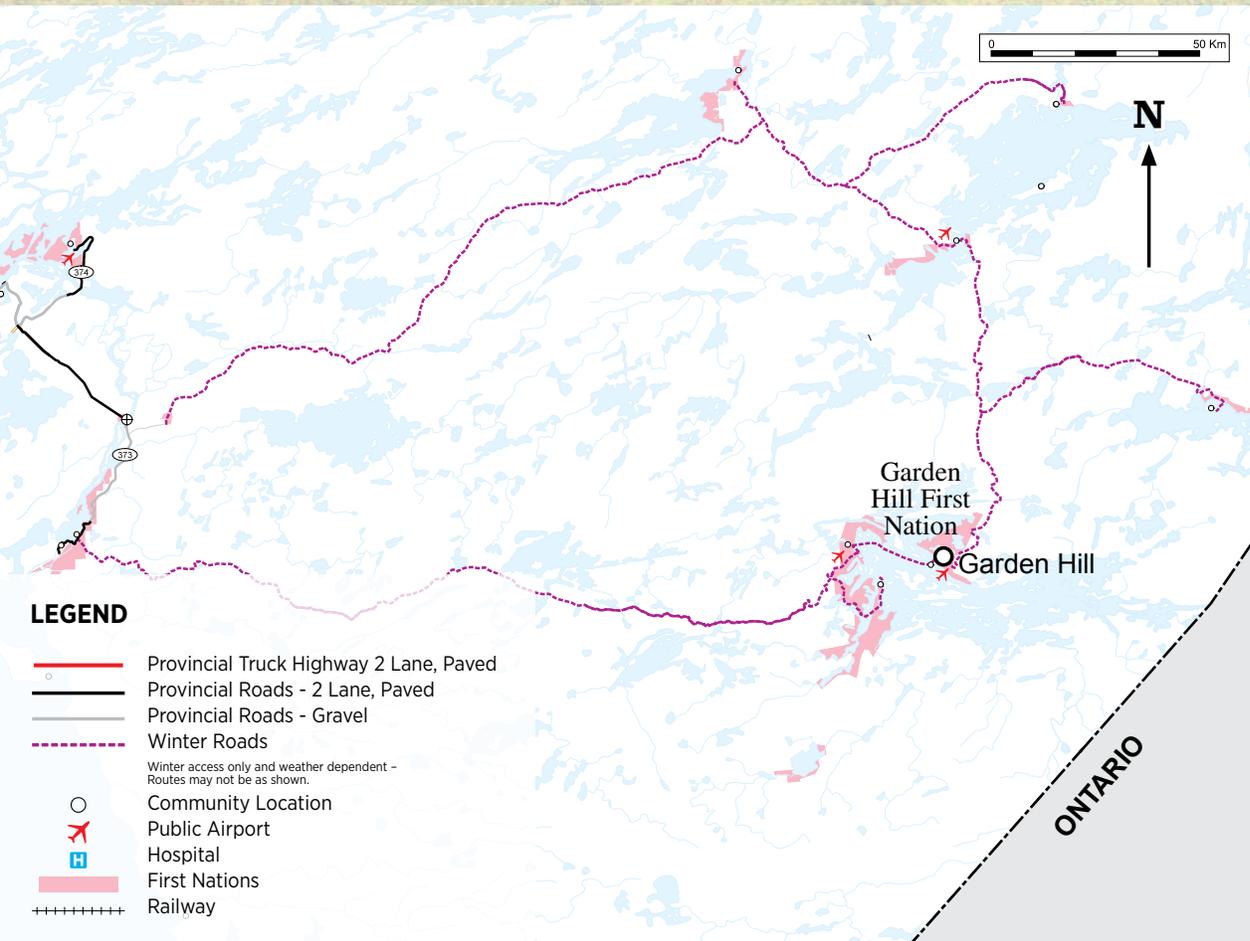


“ It is a first in a long, long time to be growing things that we would be buying at the store. ”

- Garden Hill community member

NFMCCC funding

- 2016
- 2017



> OBJECTIVES

Change the local food system to reduce dependency on southern food supplies, increase employment and training opportunities to create healthy long-lasting impacts for the community.

> LOCATION

Garden Hill First Nation is accessible by fly-in or winter road, with no all-season road. With a population of 4,400 people Garden Hill First Nation is the largest fly-in community the province. It is part of the Island Lake region.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] [2] Chickens/chicks in the coop. [3] Farm Staff constructing Meechim. [4] Panorama of farm. [5] Panorama of farm during construction. [6] Wayne Beardy with a potato grown at the farm. [7] Community Members and Farm Staff at Meechim Farm clean chickens. [8] Youth at the fall School to Farm Feast.





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GARDEN HILL FIRST NATION:

Island Lake Wabung Fishers Producers Co-op

The commercial fishing in Garden Hill First Nation had not been operating fully for many years. The Fish Packing Station had fallen into disrepair and didn't meet standards. This project was about re-opening the fish packing station and getting our fishers back to work. The local fishery is an important source of jobs and income for Garden Hill families. More than 50 men in the community have 'tags' or the right to fish commercially in the region. The fish packing station also provided employment opportunities for people. Fishing is important for providing sustainable livelihoods and for increasing access to good food in the community. Food at the grocery store is extremely expensive in Garden Hill. In 2014, the fishery in Garden Hill First

Nation was under the management of the Chief & Council. At that time with the blessing of Chief and Council, local fishers created a co-operative and were mandated to take over the management of the Fish Packing Station. In addition to local people, key partners in the last few years have been:

- The University of Manitoba provided students and staff supporting the process to start a co-op
- Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation provided technical support, loans, and planning resources

There was a lot of work to be done on the Fish Packing Station. Upgrades included improving the blast freezer and the ice machines as well as the required electrical

work. Packing equipment was purchased for the station and the docks needed to be rebuilt so float planes and boats could better deliver and receive fish. There was also the purchase and distribution of fishing equipment for new fishers. These upgrades were needed to be able to meet industry standards as well as create a safe and functional working environment. Training and supporting local people to manage the station is something that also needed attention and care.

We want to continue to explore the possibilities of moving from a fish packing station to a fish 'processing' station where value-added products can be created. This could range from filleting and pickerel cheeks, to smoked fish or processed fish products.

“The project is important to build that facility [fish packing station] up again and get it up to standard so we can get back to getting the fishers out on the lakes. It is important that we could purchase some nets and other supplies required by the fishermen so they can actually fish. It is important to teach the new fishers how to fish properly and have the regular [experienced] fishermen giving back information to the natural resources folks [about fish populations] and getting back into the fishing industry.”

- Hardy Wood, Wabung Fishers Co-op



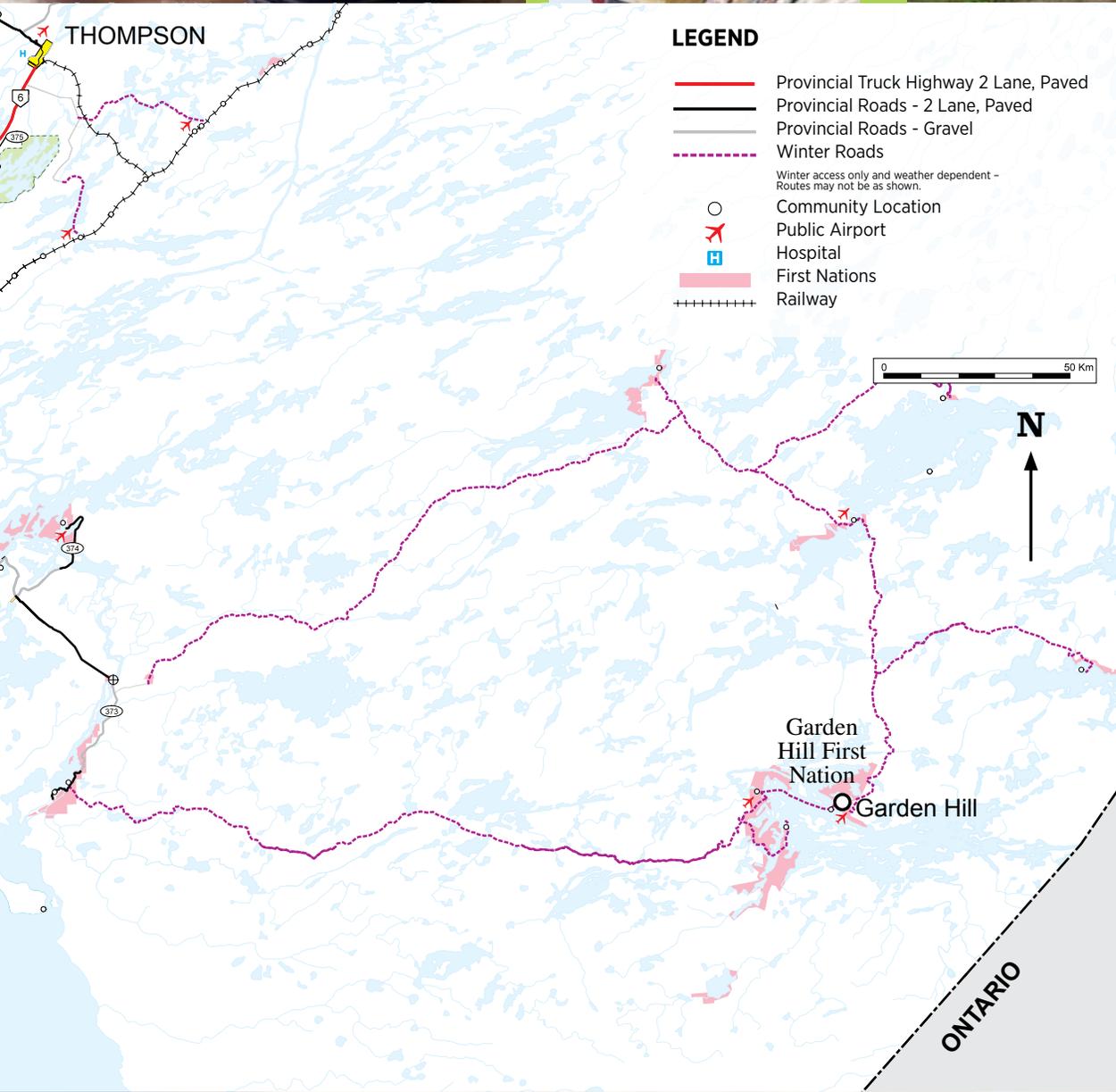
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NFMCCC funding

- 2014
- 2015
- 2016

> OBJECTIVES

To provide meaningful employment and capacity building opportunities to community members. To re-build the fish packing station to meet industry standards. To enable community members to fish and reconnect to traditional food practices, sharing the catch locally and selling it regionally.

> LOCATION

Garden Hill First Nation is accessible by air or winter road, with no all-season road. With a population of 4,400 people Garden Hill First Nation is the largest fly-in community the province. It is part of the Island Lake region.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Fish packing station. [2] Tub of whitefish [3] Bringing in the catch. [4] Worker weighing the catch. [5] Myra Harper filleting pickerel. [6] Wabung Docks, being rebuilt for float planes. [7] The Flett boys setting a net. [8] Fisherman on Island Lake.





1 2

GOD'S LAKE FIRST NATION:

Local Healthy Foods Project

In God's Lake First Nation, Bobby Ogemow, the ADI & NNC Coordinator at the God's Lake First Nation Health Center, has been working to increase local production of healthy foods in the community. The Bayline Regional Roundtable Coordinator, Carol Sanoffsky provides technical and planning support to this work as requested. Interested community members have been able to sign-up and receive help starting a garden or raising chickens and turkeys. In 2016 we also started increasing support for hunters and fishermen who share their meat and fish with the community.

We have helped start about 20 gardens in the community and we are working on getting a big community garden at our new health centre location. The Elders are involved and have lots of good gardening experience. In 2016, we produced potatoes, onions, tomatoes, squash, pumpkins and peas. We even have some peas growing

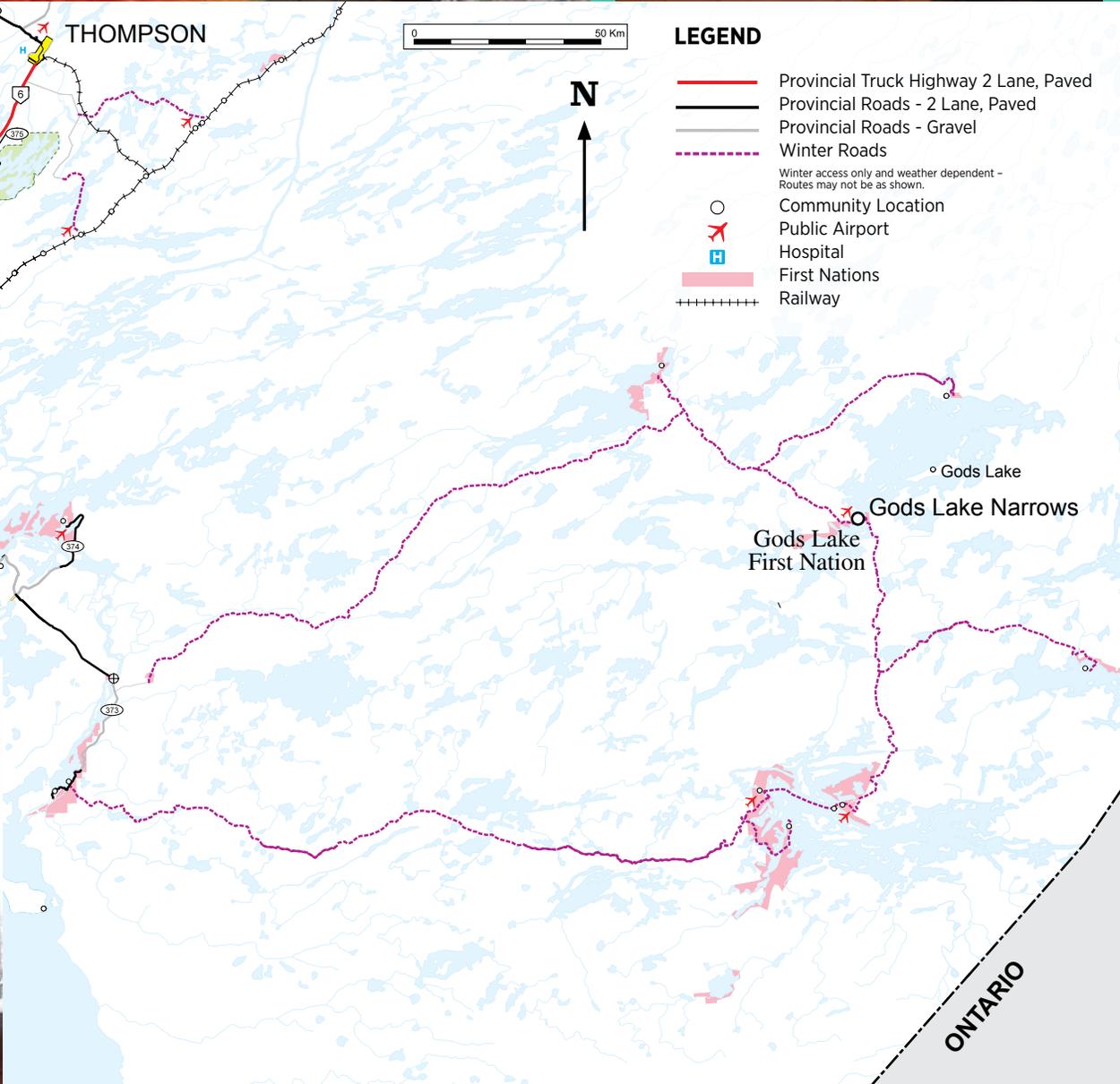
in the wild here too, remnants of an old garden by a previous father. The gardeners share their veggies with Elders and chicken harvesters are sharing the chickens too. Last year we had one chicken raiser. He has lots of experience raising birds such as: chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, peacocks and even ostriches. He only lost 2 chicks last year. When he figured a weasel was responsible, he was able to stop it from getting into the coop. He also had a hawk that was perched outside the coop for awhile, so he had to put netting over the top to protect the chickens. In other years we have had up to 8 people raising chickens in the community.

We helped hunters get out duck hunting and moose hunting in the spring and fall in 2016. There is a good moose hunting area about halfway to Shamattawa from God's Lake. It's about 100 km away so the hunters have to go out on float planes to get there. A few others went hunting

at the different trapline areas that can be reached by boat. A couple of youth go with each hunting party; we try to mix up different families a bit. The hunters share the meat with Elders and the community at feasts. The Christmas Elder's feast this year had fish caught with our support. We harvested enough fish throughout the summer and fall for community events and feasts. I think we have helped get more people going out hunting and fishing. When you look out on the lake, you always see lots of boats out there.

To address the food insecurity, we could do more work on increasing food literacy but right now we don't have a place to do workshops about cooking, preserving or smoking. We want to build a smoker but need to get some supplies first. We have also been thinking about starting a beekeeping program in the community.





**NFMCCC
funding**

- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To promote healthier living by gardening, fishing, hunting and chicken harvesting, to help offset the high cost of food and to provide alternative ways of having fun and getting exercise.

> LOCATION

God's Lake Narrows and God's Lake First Nation are located on God's Lake, 1037 kilometres Northeast of Winnipeg. The community is only accessible by airplane or winter road. There are approximately 1500 members of God's Lake First Nation living on the reserve and about 90 people living in the adjacent town.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Boats turned into raised garden beds. [2] Chickens in the coop. [3] Processing a chicken. [4] Processed chicken. [5] Bobby with 20 lb trout. [6] Carol checking in to Healy's Lodge.

“ Anyone can get the green thumb, all you need is patience and determination.

In the end its rewarding... ”

- Bobby Ogemow



LEAF RAPIDS/FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION:

Grow North Boreal Horticulture Project

In 2006 Frontier School Division began focusing on horticulture as a tool for education, youth development, and community health. The concept was designed to work within formal education and included study spaces, staff, greenhouse and outdoor growing spaces.

In 2007, Chuck Stensgard was hired as regional coordinator. Based out of Leaf Rapids and travelling to many other northern communities, Chuck has become an experienced and knowledgeable northern boreal grower. The local Leaf Rapids infrastructure is comprehensive and includes: a tunnel greenhouse, a shed greenhouse, the Churchill River Nursery with 1.5 acres of in-ground growing beds as well as indoor classroom space that includes a seed room, growing room, and laboratory.

The study and production of vegetable plants in the northern boreal forest is important on a local and global sense. The cost of good food is high and related health problems are far too common. Climate change is happening and we need to build strong food production skills and reduce our dependence on far off food sources. The Boreal Forest can support a strong local food system for northern people. Chuck Stensgard stated, “Our cooler weather and long days, and with the shelter and cover systems, we can grow amazing food. Just look at the strawberries that we have developed.”

Hundreds of youth have benefited from

the program over the years by developing gardening skills and understanding of natural systems. Summer internships are usually part of the program with up to 8 youth working in the gardens and growing food together. Adults from the community also get involved in paid and volunteer capacities. In 2016, two adults from the community who were known to have challenges with the justice system and addictions got involved in the garden. They worked to establish more than half of new good in-ground horticultural beds and “nobody worked harder than those guys”, said Chuck Stensgard. They were proud of what they were able to achieve. The downside is that they are not able to work with the students. Les Linklater said, “Lots of people are really interested in what we are doing and I think it’s awesome. I feel really good about it.”

Partnerships are important to this work. The University of Manitoba has supplied a steady supply of both service-learning and Masters students who spend time in Leaf Rapids. These partners have inspired local youth and supported further development and awareness of the program. The Northern Healthy Foods Initiative, offered through the province of Manitoba, continues to be a key partner by providing financial support and active networks focused on food security.

Going forward, the Grow North Boreal Horticultural project looks to maintain our resources and programs,

while focusing on sharing knowledge and building skills in other northern community members. In 2017, the program will host three learning events for other northerners to attend and share knowledge. Chuck recently explained that “I believe we get power from knowledge, and I have learned so much up here. I learn more every year. Getting the knowledge and inspiration out to northerners is key for this year. We will share as much information as possible.”





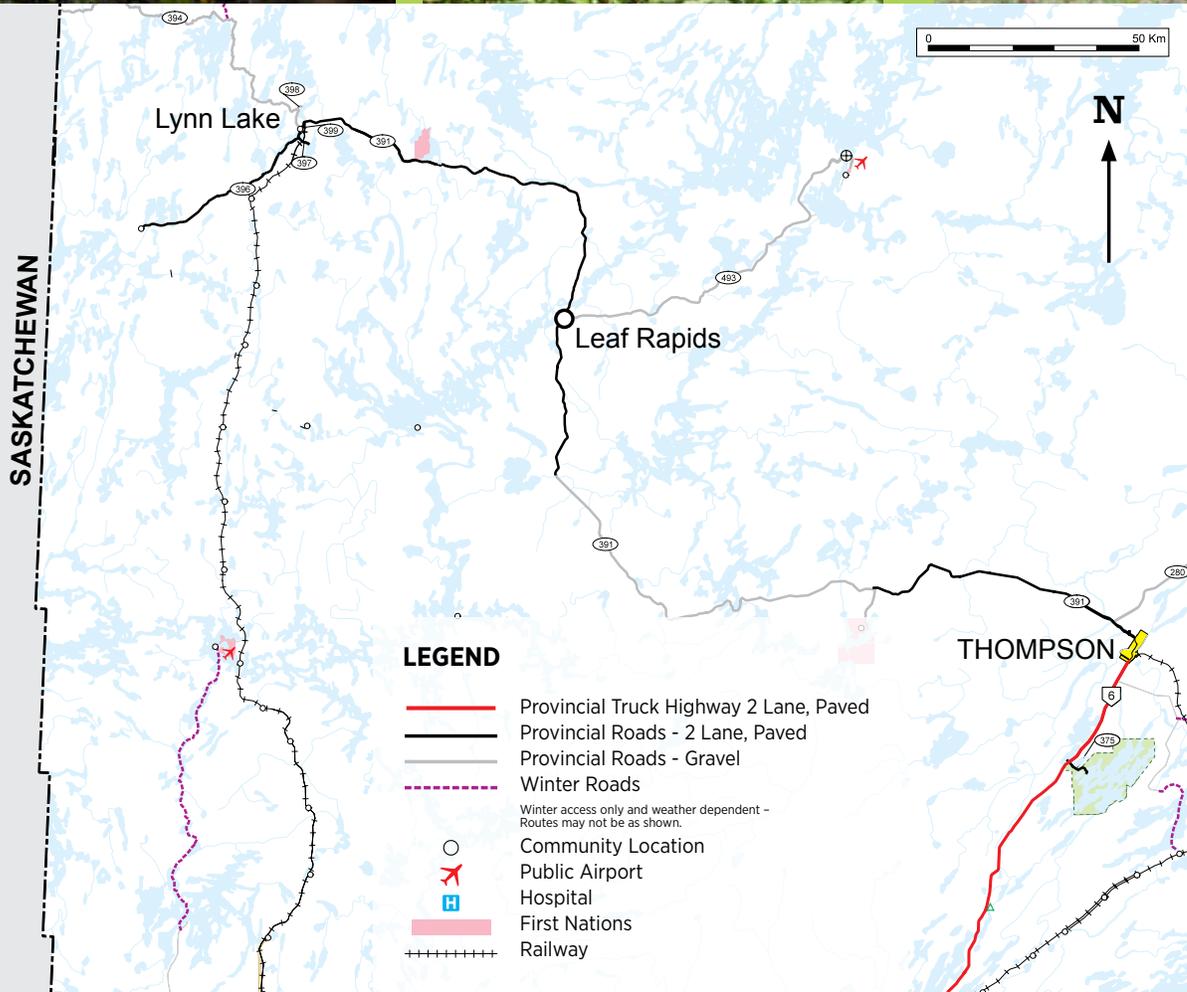
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NFMCCC funding

- 2013
- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To empower youth and adults to live well and increase food security through gardening and to be a hub of sharing and learning on gardening and greenhouse techniques for northern boreal communities.

> LOCATION

Leaf Rapids has year-round road access and is located 1,000 km north of Winnipeg. Created using an experimental design, it's a post-mining town that has transitioned from a population of 2,500 to roughly 400. Frontier School Division provides educational services to a larger geographical area than any other school division in Canada. The division includes 41 schools and operates in many small communities that are only accessible by boat, plane, rail or winter road.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Plants in the tunnel greenhouse. [2] Les and Neil transplanting into the raised beds. [3] Mid-season growing. [4] Youth helping out watering plants. [5] Neil picking strawberries. [6] The 2016 Crew in the Churchill River Nursery. [7] Plants in the shed greenhouse.

“ I am learning knowledge about being a boreal forester that I will pass along to future generations like my daughter. This is something that I never thought I would do in my life. We are farmers, Neil and I say we are farmers. We have such tanned arms and white shoulders!

- Les Linklater

People come here and see what is possible, they will see the hope and the future for the north, and they will see the potential of the north.

- Chuck Stensgard



MATHIAS COLOMB CREE NATION / PUKATAWAGAN: Community Freezer Project

Mathias Colomb Cree Nation (MCCN) has a history of helping hunters go out to feed their families with their shell giveaway. In 2016, the Pukatawagan Development Corporation began development of a community freezer program to store local wild foods for the community's residents.

The building blocks for the program, the sea-can, freezers and lumber, are now in Pukatawagan while the development of the community food centre is ongoing. We are currently trying to find a site for the centre where it can be connected to the needed electrical. While we are working on the conversion of the sea-can, hunters and fishermen continue to share meat the way they always have, by taking it to the Elders themselves. In 2015 we were able to build 5 new smoke houses in the community to make it easier to preserve wild meat and fish.

We are continuing to help hunters and fishermen go out. The MCCN annual shell giveaway happened again in 2016. The hunters really like the program because it makes it easier for them to go out and feed their family good food. One big thing that happened in 2016 was that we got insurance for the high-railers. They are used to take hunters out along the old train tracks towards Lynn Lake. The hunters didn't have much luck hunting around river and lakes close to the reserve this year but they had better luck up the tracks.

The local fishermen association is supportive of the program and wanted to provide fish but there wasn't much fish to share this year. The fall fishing season got cut short because of the early snowfall and fishermen were struggling to fill their quotas. The winter fishing season was also shortened by the warm weather.

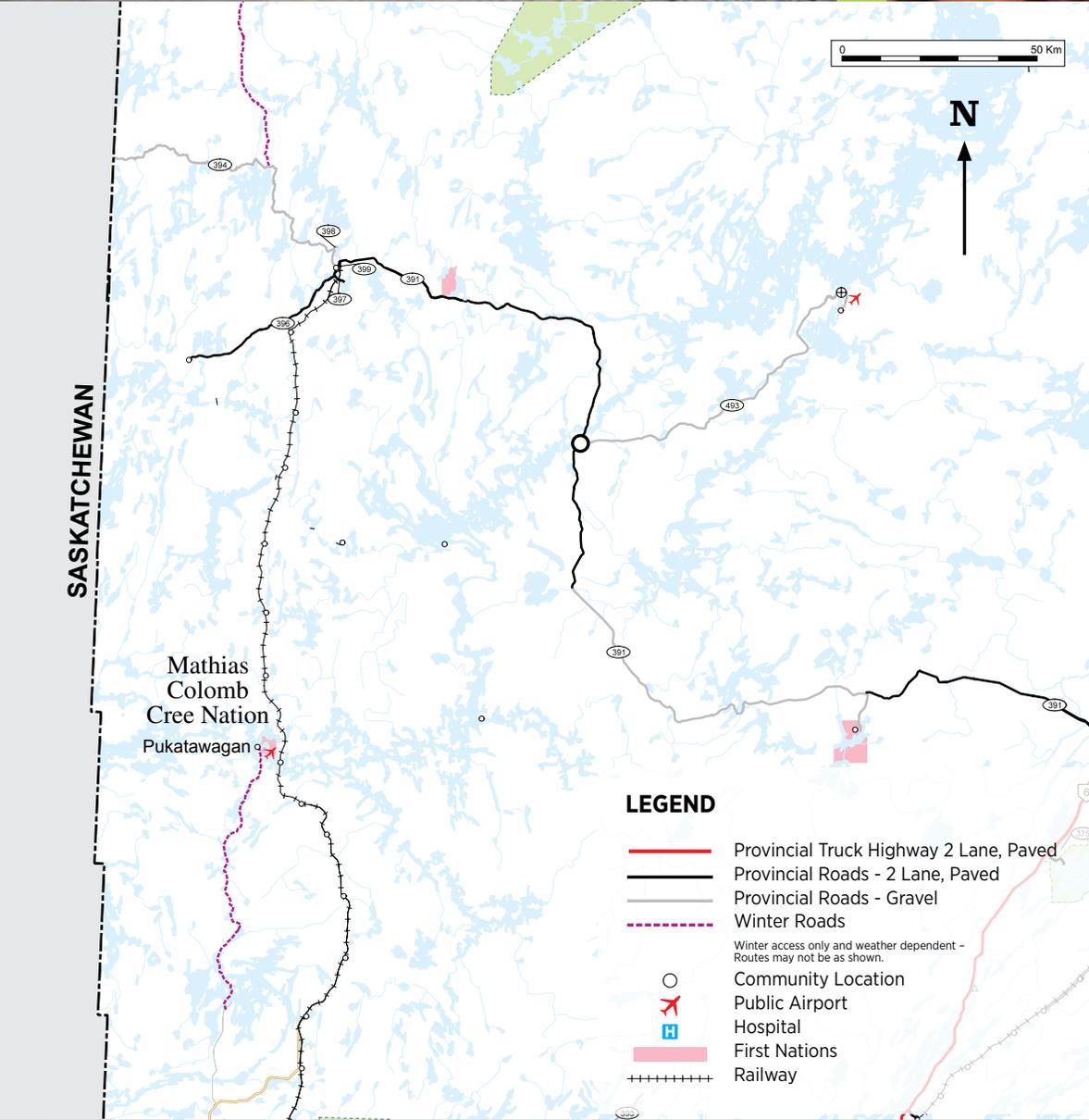
The Elders of the community are behind the program, happy to supply fishing equipment for the program and continuing to pass on knowledge that helps future generations. The Elders help with preparing fish, moose and other wild game. We also hope to bring back the technique of preparing moose hides as it has been some time since that has happened. If we do not pass this knowledge along, we fear it will be lost with the elders.

When the building is converted and the program is up and running, the local radio station and Facebook page will be used to share information with the community members of Pukatawagan. We are also trying to connect with the school to take students out on hunting and fishing trips, to get young people out on the land more as part of a new Summer Traditional Learning Program.





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**NFMCCC
funding**

- 2014
- 2016

> **OBJECTIVES**

To construct a community building where residents can store local wild food as well as equipment for hunting, fishing, and trapping. The building will have freezers and supplies for the storage, processing and distribution of traditional foods.

> **LOCATION**

Mathias Colomb Cree Nation (also known as Pukatawagan) is a remote northern Manitoba First Nation located 210 km north of The Pas and 819 km north of Winnipeg. The main community of Pukatawagan is accessible by plane with the aboriginal-owned Mississippi Airways or by train with the Keewatin Railway Company. A temporary winter road from Kisisising Lake is open for about 3 months of the year. The total population is 3,711 members registered with approximately 2800 people living on reserve.

> **PHOTO DETAILS**

[1] [2] Processing a moose kill. [3] Hi-railer used to transport hunters along the tracks. [4] Local women cutting up the moose meat. [5] Mural of former members of Chief and Council on the arena. [6] View of Pukatawagan from the plane.





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BARROWS, RORKETON, WINNIPEGOSIS, WATERHEN,
CRANE RIVER, SPENCE LAKE, DAWSON BAY, ST MARTIN:

NACC Beekeeping Project



The Northern Association of Community Councils Beekeeping program began as a pilot in 2013 and has grown and refined each year since. The program started small with five families taking part. Since that time many have gotten to be quite strong beekeepers. In 2016, there were 11 families actively participating in the program.

The NACC Beekeeping Program is a five year graduated support program that facilitates learning about bees as well as acquiring the bees and equipment needed to keep them. Participants sign a contract that outlines their responsibilities as well as the NACC's commitments to the program. Each participant keeps a logbook that details their beekeeping activity. The logbook helps beekeepers keep track of their operations and helps the NACC track the activities of the apiaries. In 2015, one NACC staff member described the new contract system, "This really helped to guide us towards beekeepers to understanding the path to sustainability. We also did a better job of record keeping with the project."

Pollination benefits have been obvious to many of the participants. Dave Olsen from the Homebrook community shared that his gardens were "over productive" after the bees were added and Alana Parker from Dawson Bay also observed significant changes in local pollination rates.

Honey and other bee products are shared and sold in a variety of different ways. For some families the honey serves to offset the purchasing of sugar for their large families. Other participants sell or share the honey locally. In 2016, the first workshops focused on non-honey products

The participants have an array of motivators for joining the project. From economic development opportunities for their families, to pollination, to positive and action-based projects for children, adults and elders to be involved in, people are finding many benefits from

keeping bees. One 2016 participant said, "The honey we harvested is amazing and the smiles I see on my children's faces when the elders thank them and tell them how good it was, is completely worth every minute and penny."

In 2016, more than 4,100 pounds of honey was harvested from over 70 hives by our participants. Beekeepers have also learned how to split their own hives and some are working on raising queens. The participants are now able to teach and support each other in a way that was simply not possible during the first years of the program. We are excited to support the emergence of new beekeepers, to increase the total number of beehives and see the resulting pollination benefits and honey produced by small and

remote northern Manitoba communities. In 2017, the NACC will be supporting some communities along the Bayline, with only rail access, to get into beekeeping. We will also continue to provide training and supports to our current participants and to promote this important project.



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like candles and soaps took place. Bonnie Dumas commented on the culture of sharing between the beekeepers and other community members, "We shared the honey with members of the community and co-workers. We also shared the information we learned with others and got people interested in possibly trying to raise their own bees."



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SASKATCHEWAN



LEGEND

- Provincial Truck Highway 2 Lane, Paved
- Provincial Roads - 2 Lane, Paved
- Provincial Roads - Gravel
- - - Winter Roads
- Winter access only and weather dependent - Routes may not be as shown.
- Community Location
- ✈ Public Airport
- H Hospital
- First Nations
- Railway

0 50 Km



**NFMCCC
funding**

- 2013
- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To expand beekeeping in communities of northern Manitoba for community economic development, increased food security, and pollination.

> LOCATION

This project takes place in multiple communities throughout the Manitoba Parklands region, with populations mostly under 150 people per community. All communities are members of the Northern Association of Community Councils. NACC is an advocacy and support group focused on improving the quality of life in Northern Association Communities.

> PHOTO DETAILS

- [1] Alana Parker catches a swarm.
- [2] Beekeeping workshop.
- [3] Bonnie's son ready to help.
- [4] Dave and Aaron Olsen extract honey.
- [5] Nikki and Els Verink bottling honey.
- [6] Leilani extracts honey with her baby.
- [7] Creaming the honey.
- [8] Beekeepers attend a training.

“ *The training for the families has really improved. We have experienced participants training new participants now. This helped new participants understand that it (beekeeping) is actually doable. It helped people be more comfortable and to know they can do it, and they have a place to go for help or support.*

- NACC Staff

The most exciting things about this project were turning a dream into a reality, involving the entire family in the project and getting those around us excited about it.

- Bonnie Dumas, participant

This project brought in much needed pollination to our community, which helped increase the garden yields for our residents.

- Alana Parker, Participant

DAWSON BAY & PINE DOCK:

NACC Fish Composting Stations

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The idea started in 2014, and in 2015 the NACC started to provide support to develop two fish composting stations between three communities: Matheson Island, Pine Dock and Dawson Bay. Matheson Island and Pine Dock had planned to co-manage a fish station as they are only 15 kilometers apart. Dawson Bay was also very interested. Matheson Island has since decided not to participate in the project. Currently Dawson Bay is the furthest along with testing and implementing the Fish Composting Station.

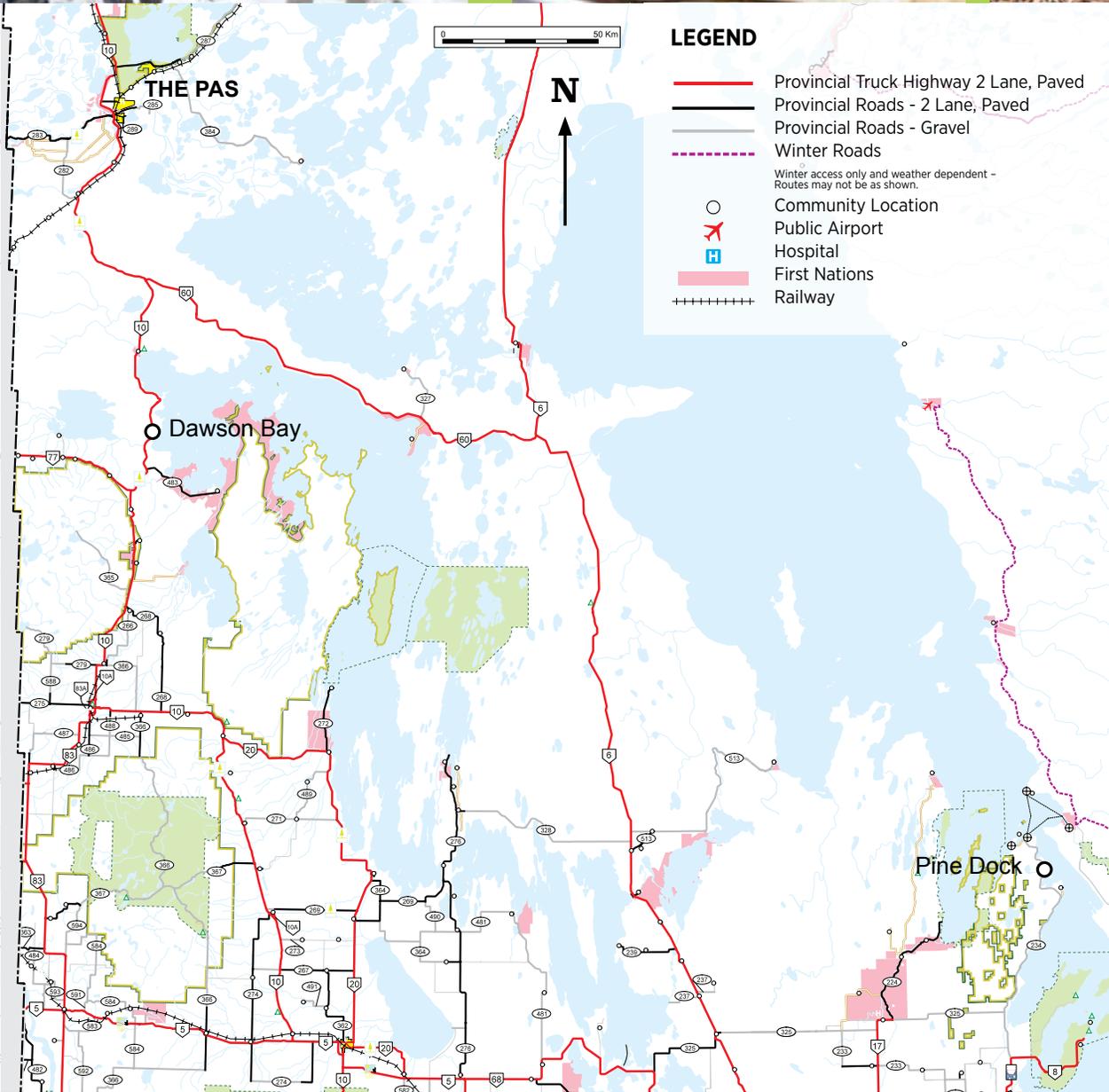
The Community Council of Dawson Bay made the following statement about their reasons for wanting the Fish Composting Station. “Our council would like to see this project start by creating a reliable compost material supply for our community residents, increase the local fishermen’s income, and create jobs for individuals in our community. We will utilize the local fishermen’s raw fish waste that is generally dumped out on the lake or hauled to our local waste disposal site, and hopefully create some jobs to stimulate the economy in our community. Fishing is currently the only job opportunity in Dawson Bay. This Fish Composting Project is important to our community; fertilizer and compost materials are expensive to bring in.”

Each Fish Station is a designated area in the community that has a solid pad and secure fencing. A Manitoba company called Innovat designed and manufactured the compost drums, where the first stage of composting takes place. The waste fish is placed into the drum along with ‘browns’, a mulched wood base. The drum is turned each day. After a sufficient period of time the compost is taken out of the drums and laid out in wind rows that are 10-15 feet long and 6-8 feet wide. During this stage the final composting takes place. Technical support for this project has come from NACC, Manitoba Composting Association, and Manitoba Agriculture. Many government departments needed to be consulted including Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship, Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, and Manitoba Agriculture.

There have been challenges in getting the fish stations up and running. “Everything was going well until we started having issues with the composter drum itself,” said Dawson Bay Mayor, Darlene Parker. Adjustments had to be made to the drums because the frames were not adequately supporting the weight, causing the turning mechanism to be too difficult for the Public Works staff to use. One solution may be

to motorize the turning mechanism. There has also been the recognition of need for a more powerful wood chipper to service the station. One Dawson Bay Community Councillor shared, “It is a pilot project so we needed to learn. There are lots of little things to consider!” The communities had initially worried about bears being attracted to the area, but so far this has not happened. There is very little smell associated with the Fish Composting Stations.

Optimism is high as the fishing stations should start producing large amounts of compost in 2017. “When we [the council] get talking about it, we get very excited about. I just think there are endless possibilities for this! We need some money to get going on the marketing end of things down the road,” said Mayor, Darlene Parker. Some greenhouses in the region have started to inquire about the product and one of the next steps for the community is to prepare samples for distribution this coming season. Another important action for 2017 is to repeat and strengthen the training for local people who are running the fish composting stations. “This is a learning experience for all of us who are involved,” believes Alana Parker, Dawson Bay resident.



**NFMCCC
funding**

- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To create community infrastructure that turns waste product into valuable fertilizer for the purpose of community benefits which include: improved access to fertilizer, increased infrastructure, increased self-reliance and potential for social enterprise and economic development.

> LOCATION

Dawson Bay is a small community with population of about 40 people, located at the north end of Lake Winnipegosis with year-round road access. Pine Dock has a population of approximately 80 people and is located on Lake Winnipeg with year-round road access. Both communities rely heavily on fishing for their local economy.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Fish composters in the Fall of 2015. [2] Fish composting training in Pine Dock. [3] Fish waste. [4] Fish compost in Dawson Bay.

“For economic development this project could be a great thing. I have been here for many year and I never thought to use fish in any form except food.”

- Darlene Parker, Dawson Bay



OPASKWAYAK CREE NATION:

Opaskwayak Culture & Healthy Living Initiatives

We have 5 big gardens, a summer kitchen, bee hives, a turtle mound herb garden, pumpkin patch, and will soon build our clay oven. People bring their kids and grandkids and it is good to see families getting together in the gardens. We set days aside (Tuesday night and Thursday night) for each garden so that people would go and work in the gardens. Part of that is because socializing is just as important as anything else. People go there and visit as they work.

In 2013 we began our journey by planting 55 fruit trees. Unfortunately, that year our potential orchard was flooded. But we didn't give up. We started again; "...if at first you don't succeed, etc...".

We started over again and we planted. In 2014 38 families signed up to take part in a community vegetable and berry garden. For the main garden, we chose a high ridge of land beside an old creek bed, in the center of the settlement so that everyone would have access by walking to the site. Preparing the Site: Wa weni kani wak. Because there was no topsoil, we had to scrape the top layer, remove all the rocks, haul in topsoil and level the area; an

expensive and labour intensive job. The OCN Recreation and Beautification Team helped a lot with this work. The soil came from across the river from a farmer and took most of our budget. The soil came from the land that is our traditional territory.

Planting and seeding: Kistiganiwak. In two separate gardens we planted 87 fruit trees: apples, crabapples, plums, chokecherries, raspberries and cherries. Then we focused on the vegetable garden. Each worker took a tree home to plant in their own yard. We had to re-learn all those necessary things that go into making a garden (and a family) grow. I had forgotten that garden work requires continuous attention, endless patience all those things that go into a healthy happy family. To build community and get kids involved with adults, we held a birdhouse making competition. It was a huge success and helped us wait as the seedlings took root and began to sprout.

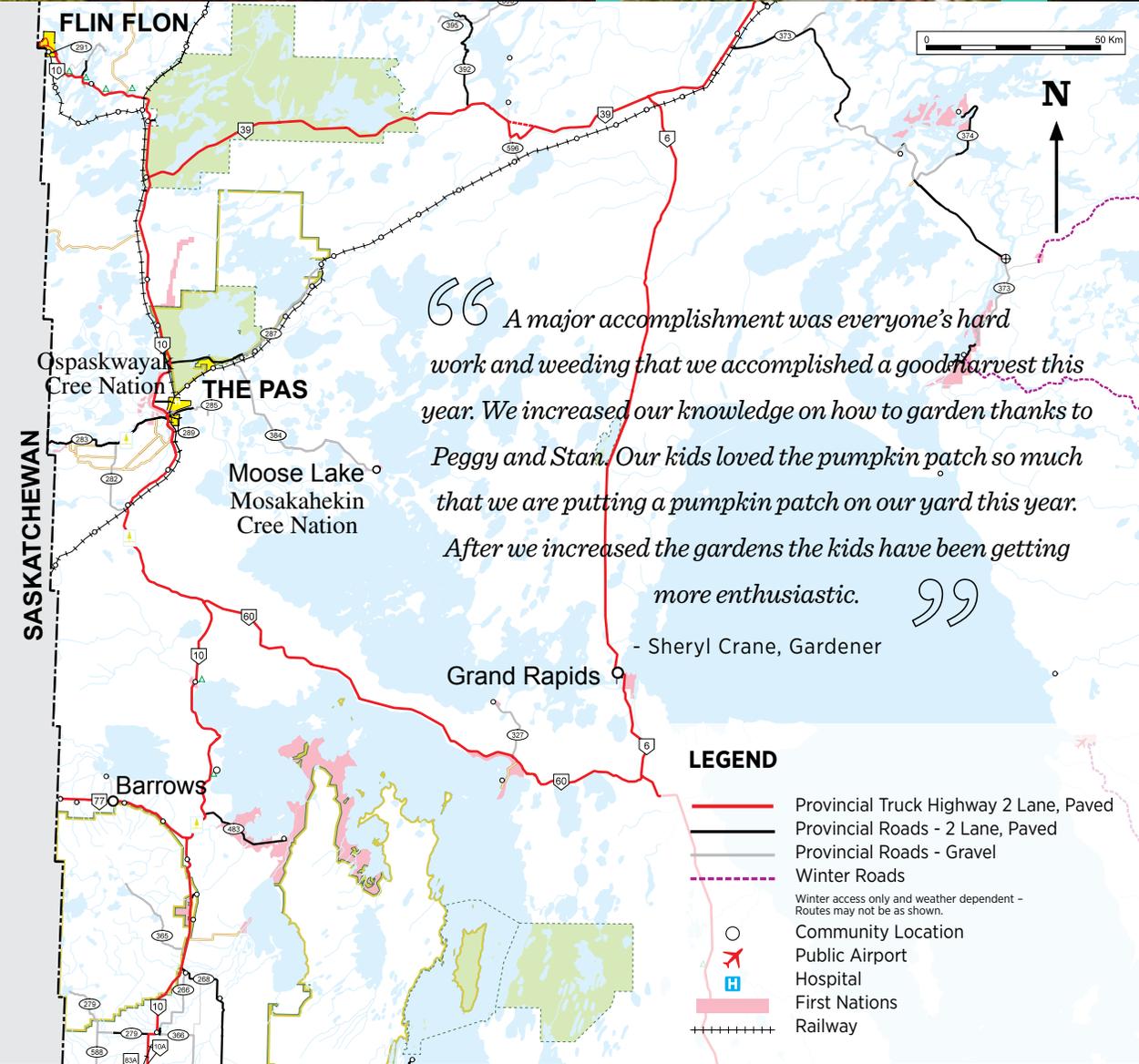
Growing: Nitawigin. The excitement of seeing new plants –and learning the difference between weeds and

vegetables and weeding and weeding, and weeding...

Harvesting: Moonay Kaniwak. The food from the garden is shared with everyone who helps out. Some of it goes to feasts and community events. The kitchen will help us learn to cook and use the all of the foods grown.

What we learned: It's good for the Elders to get moving again, instead of thinking they have to stop living at 50. We need to prepare and plant the garden together but after that we need an individual weeding schedule so everyone does it regularly. Everyone has to help out or else it is too much work for a few people. Having students can help, but it is a lot of work to manage them. Peggy and Stan need successors so that the major load is shared, we have been working to get more people involved in the leadership of the garden. People really like beets! We need less seeds and we need to take more care in planting; space the seeds further apart and thin the plants sooner.





“ A major accomplishment was everyone’s hard work and weeding that we accomplished a good harvest this year. We increased our knowledge on how to garden thanks to Peggy and Stan. Our kids loved the pumpkin patch so much that we are putting a pumpkin patch on our yard this year. After we increased the gardens the kids have been getting more enthusiastic. ”

- Sheryl Crane, Gardener

> PHOTO DETAILS

- [1] [2] [3] Families working at the Big Eddy Garden.
- [4] Youth building the Turtle Mound Herb Garden at the main garden.
- [5] [6] Honey extraction at Peggy and Stan’s.
- [7] Mabel and her granddaughter harvesting carrots.
- [8] Northern lights over the main garden.

“ Learning how to grow the vegetables gave me the confidence to know that I can do this. Now that I have a hand in gardening I want to try more things and the fruit side and see just how far we can go with this. It feels like we are getting started and can do much more. ”

- Noreen Singh, Gardener

NFMCCC funding

- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVE

We are Opaskwayak Inniwak (Opaskwayak Cree). We were a healthy nation with our own gardens and a healthy hunting and fishing culture until processed foods, sedentary lifestyles, and dependency moved in. Now 65% of our population has diabetes and as many are obese and sickly. We want to change. We want to return to our roots of strength, physical prowess and harmony with the earth.

> LOCATION

Opaskwayak Cree Nation is adjacent to the Saskatchewan River and The Pas, Manitoba. OCN has year round road access, and a population of about 3,200 on reserve.





PEGUIS FIRST NATION:

Peguis Agriculture Project

Founded in 2011, the Peguis Community Garden Project is now in its sixth year and has successfully maintained seven acres of land producing a variety of healthy foods for community members. The Community Garden Project was started with a committee of five people headed by Council member Darlene Bird, Carl McCorrister, and Elder Ernie Stranger. There were a variety of other people who helped and made our project possible. The project is pleased to have Northern Healthy Foods Initiative and the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture & Community Collaborative provide funding over the years. Four Arrows Health Authority has worked with us and continue to provide their expertise to our project. The Peguis Development Corporation has been the administration of our project with Mr. Patrick McKay of PDC being the Administrator. We have two or three Elders gatherings during the summer and rely on their input regarding our project and success. To date, our project has worked well and has continued to be respected and followed throughout the province by other communities who share the vision of food security.

Our people from St. Peter's were good farmers and would bring food into Winnipeg to make a living. Treaty Days at the old reservation would have 5,000 people coming to attend, buying food and products. We have a history of raising food for exchange with others and for market. Our work together has the following objectives:

We want to promote healthy eating, growing our own food, and to work cooperatively with all. We wish to bring together the human resources available and network with other organizations that share the vision of Food Security for the future. We aim to promote awareness of land use and our ability to produce our own healthy foods, assisting community members in gardening and share resources and knowledge. This will assist all in developing community pride, wellness, resources, and promote community building. We plan to establish a Farmers' Market and promote self-sufficiency in growing, promoting and selling our fresh produce to all. We strive to improve our lands with more agricultural endeavors for the future.

To date, we have measured our success based mainly on the result of our work and the feedback of our Elders. The garden produce we have grown has been exceptional and shared with all. We had two Elders Days at the garden site. We also have had many open days when we invited visitors along with youth and elders to come and visit the garden site. We also maintain a picture album that shows the stages of our garden work and demonstrates the success we had throughout the growing season.

Our produce has been given to our Elders who take part in the project. One Elder, Fast Eddy, comes about every third day to get a few potatoes, an onion, and a few peas and a cucumber for his dinner. We also provide produce to the Peguis Food Bank. We get

people coming to see us on the garden site and wanting fresh produce. We try to do this. However, the project is a stepping stone in community building and regaining our heritage of independence as per our history. We don't want to promote dependency; we must use our project as a teaching tool and show our people that they can grow much of their own food. In our community, many of our people raised, grew, and produced much of their own food up to the 1960s. At that time it was estimated that over 80% of food needs were met this way. Today, most of our food comes from the store.

Our project has become known throughout Manitoba by various organizations, having received awards such as the Golden Carrot in October 2014 for our successful work and garden. One area we are continuing to develop is growing traditional tobacco. We have successfully grown it here for traditional use and will continue to improve and expand our crop. We must overcome these colonial mindsets and look to the future together. There are many things we could accomplish if we worked together and shared our resources. The Peguis Community Garden is just a small step in rebuilding our heritage and culture; it is also a form of reconciliation that is so important in the decolonization process. It could also have an economic impact on our community with support for use of land, making resources available, working together, and taking pride in having food security for all.

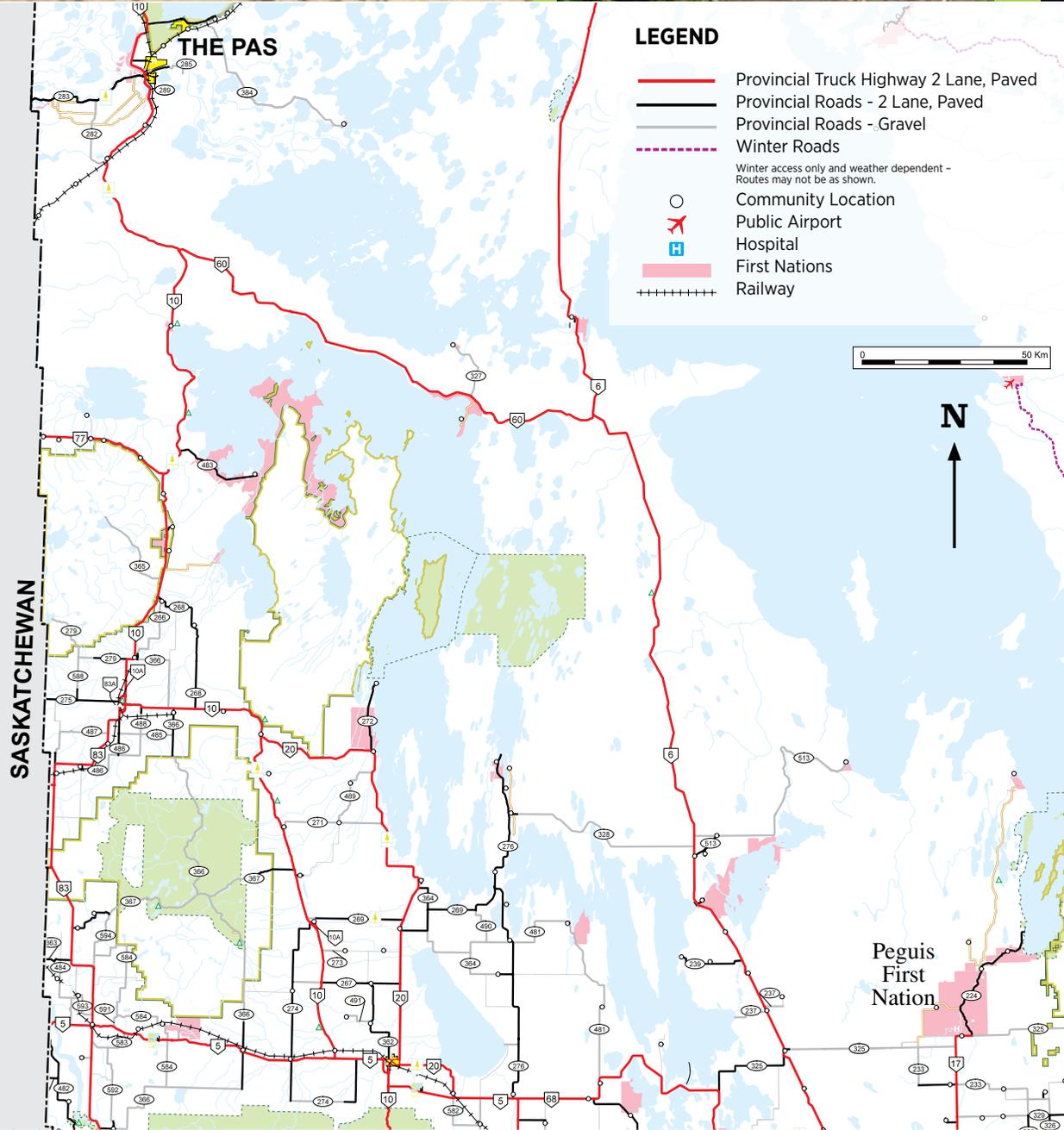




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NFMCCC funding

- ☑ 2014
- ☑ 2015
- ☑ 2016
- ☑ 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To regain and build our heritage and culture of agriculture that a majority of our people will regain the concept of growing their own healthy foods in the hope that their children will continue this cultural activity and provide food security for all.

> LOCATION

Peguis First Nation is located approximately 200km north of Winnipeg. It has year round road access. Peguis First Nation is the largest First Nation community in Manitoba, with a population of approximately 10,000 on the reserve.

> PHOTO DETAILS

- [1] Workshop participants help with planting.
- [2] Mr. Bear rototills the garden.
- [3] Harvesting Potatoes.
- [4] Garden Arbor at the main garden.
- [5] Working at the Peguis Agricultural Project.
- [6] Customer at Farmers' Market.
- [7] Workshop participants harvesting rainbow swiss chard.

“...the people that were working and being involved it has helped them with the whole idea of food security. That idea has taken root here, I can talk with some of these people now and we are on the same wavelength. It's surprising that people come to me and talk about what we need to do of the future, their own ideas. It's good and this is something that we have come to this point after six years.”

- Carl McCorrister, Garden Supervisor



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PEONAN POINT: School Greenhouse

The students and staff of Peonan Point School have been fundraising for the last two years to build a greenhouse for the families who reside on the Point. The greenhouse is intended to operate all year round producing fresh foods for the community members and offer a diversity of learning opportunities to the local students. There are currently 8 students at the school. Fundraising efforts were quite labor intensive and included: making crafts to sell, baking for bake sales, and cleaning the local dump-site each spring. Parents, family and the craft sale attendees in nearby Ashern have generously supported the students. After the grant funds were applied to the balance due, they found the students had raised enough funds to make up the difference required.

As this greenhouse was meant to fill a gap in the community's accessibility to fresh produce, it needed to be a structure that would work in Manitoba winters. After considerable research and many nay-sayers, they settled on working with a company called Growing Technologies. Located in Neepawa, Growing Technologies helped to determine the size and design of the greenhouse. The structure was tested through two Manitoba winters with users successfully growing produce and flowers.

They had a few setbacks in the timing of the project, but kept pushing forward. The greenhouse was erected on a miserable, cold day in the fall of 2016 which was later than planned. Then the rain came and did not stop for about six weeks. That weather made travel in and out of the Point difficult at best. This pushed back the electrician's schedule,

but hydro was finally hooked up in late October. The next challenge was getting the topsoil delivered. Many suppliers could not get to their stockpiles because of the wet, unfrozen ground. The grade 11 student who was taking a horticulture course tracked down a supplier in Hilbre and soil was delivered in early December. Everything was finally in place except the water.

The greenhouse has made a number of learning opportunities possible. For the first time at Peonan Point School, senior years students are able to take optional horticulture courses for high school credits. This opportunity is important, as most of the students have to take their high school courses by telephone or from the teacher in a tiny one room school. This has

meant it has been difficult for students to get enough optional credits at the grade 11 and 12 levels. Currently a grade 11 student from the community is enrolled in two horticulture courses: greenhouse and landscaping. He monitors the temperature inside the greenhouse (in our 40 below weather) to determine what it should be set at. He has also searched out soil prices, researched plants that grow well in cooler temperatures, and cares for the plants that were salvaged from summer gardens. He is in the process of drawing up plans for a landscaped area to the south of the greenhouse. The creation of the raised beds and walkways have also put our Grade 11 students' woodworking skills to use.



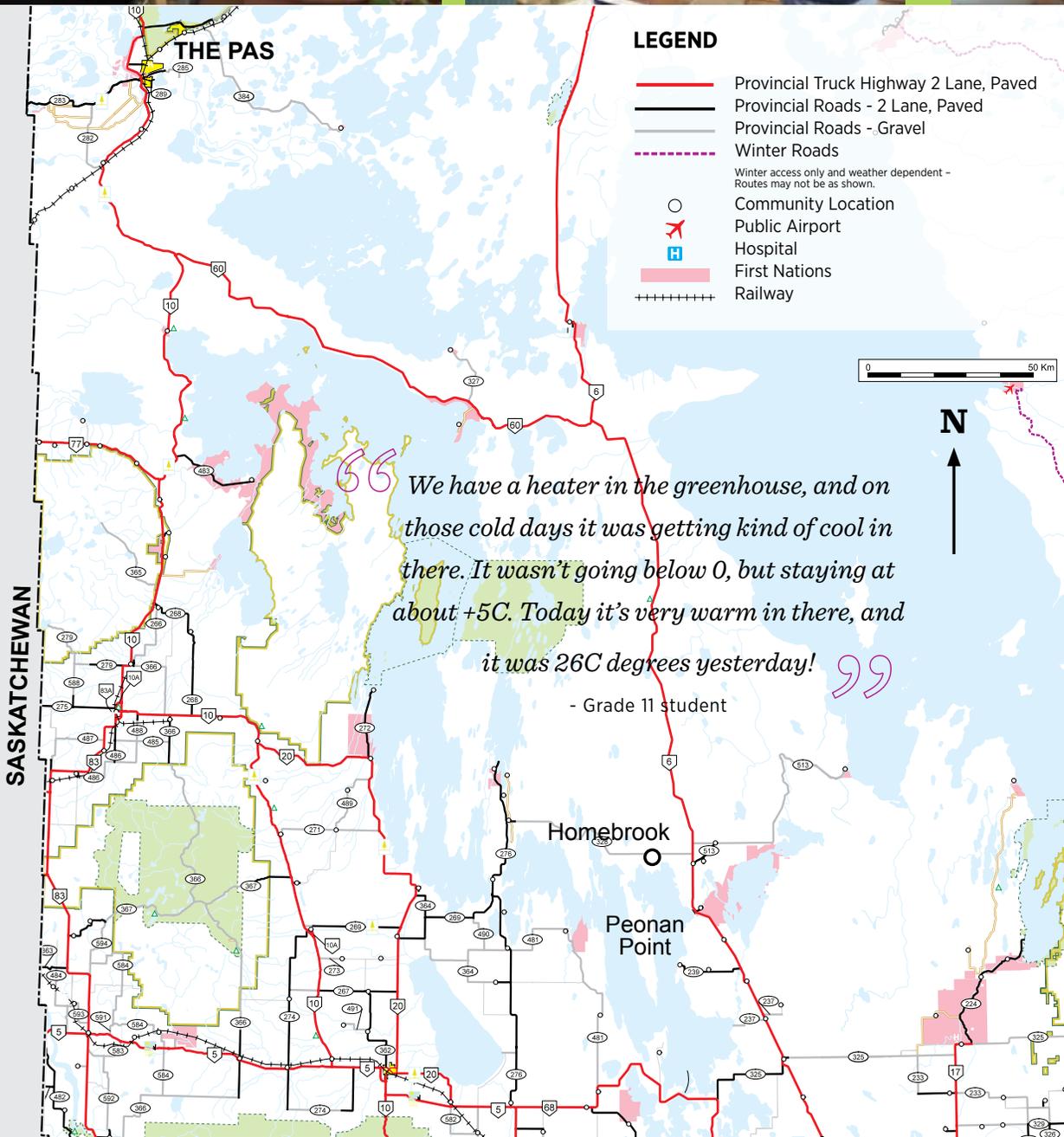
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NFMCCC funding

☑ 2016

> OBJECTIVES

To produce and harvest fresh produce for community members year-round, improve community health through improved diet and connect the greenhouse with high school courses which would enable students to complete their education in their home community instead of moving away for grades 11 and 12.

> LOCATION

Peonan Point is located on a point of land on the north shore of Lake Manitoba. It has year-round road access. The Homebrook/ Peonan Point community is home to about 50 people.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1, 2] Morgan in the greenhouse.
 [3] Morgan and Owen. [4] Jacob transplanting baby plants.
 [5] Owen watering the plants. [6] Wayanita watering the plants. [7] The School Greenhouse.

“ I think we are really lucky to have this [greenhouse] part of our school. I really like it. ”

- Student

“ I think the hardest part was just thinking of the different ways we could raise money for the project. ”

- Student



POPLAR RIVER FIRST NATION: Negginan Food Producers Co-op

Community members in Poplar River First Nation have been actively exploring local food production options over the last five years. The community has a strong fishing industry and people are used to wild foods and fish. In 2012, the Health Centre focused their efforts on increasing gardening in the community and raising chickens. This work was supported by Leon Simard, First Nations Food Security Coordinator. Good food is hard to access in remote communities like Poplar River, and people want to learn more and do more about producing their own foods.

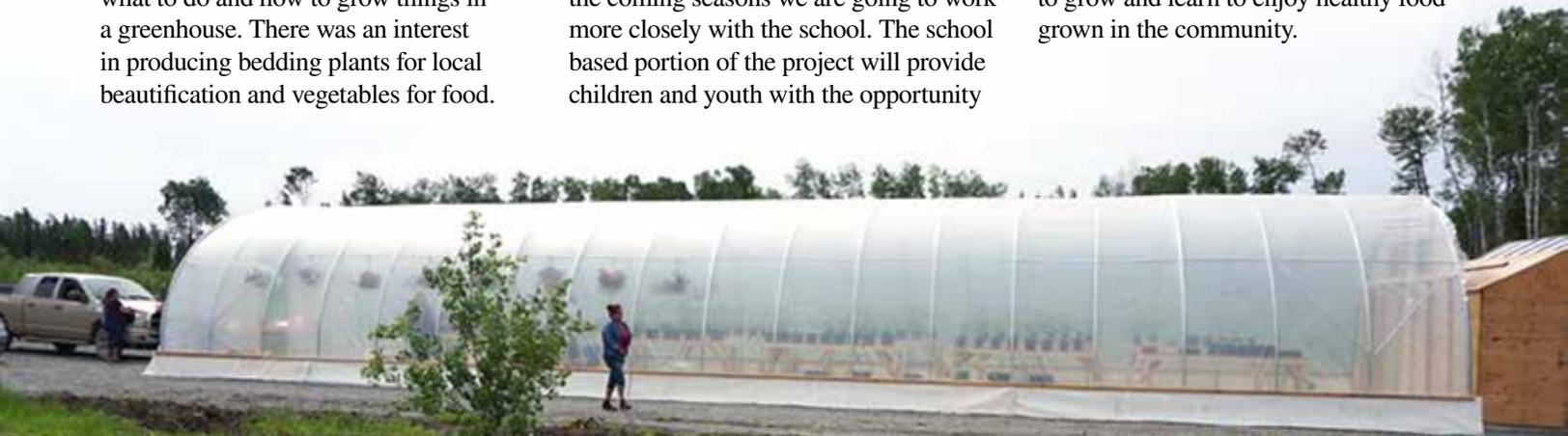
Since that time the Health Centre has steadily developed this work and now has a one acre garden site and a large community greenhouse that is 70 feet long and 20 feet wide. The grand opening of the Poplar River Greenhouse happened in summer of 2016. Everyone came out to see it including school children, RCMP, Chief and Council, Health Centre staff and lots of community members. It was the first year of operations for the greenhouse and people were learning what to do and how to grow things in a greenhouse. There was an interest in producing bedding plants for local beautification and vegetables for food.

Greenhouse and garden staff are managed by the Health Centre. This year the school is going to get more involved.

In the fall of 2016 there was some vandalism to the greenhouse, but the young people responsible were identified and there have been conversations about not damaging things that are important to the community. “You could tell that this is an important place for us as a community because when it was vandalized everyone was upset. I think we have to keep trying and fixing it up,” said Sophia Rabliauskas, community member. “Our long term goal, after getting our community eating healthier and growing lots of our own foods, is to learn how to form a cooperative. We are interested in selling vegetables and sharing them around the area to other near by communities (Berens River, Little Grand Rapids and Pauingassi). This can only happen once we get good at our gardening and greenhouse operations and get enough people interested,” said Mary Bruce, Health Centre Director. In the coming seasons we are going to work more closely with the school. The school based portion of the project will provide children and youth with the opportunity

to develop skills in food production and gardening as well as food preparation and nutritional information.

Planned activities for 2017 include: repairing and using the greenhouse, installing new fencing around the greenhouse and garden/orchard area, providing employment for a garden/greenhouse coordinator, hooking up the vents and electrical heating in the greenhouse, providing training in greenhouse operation maintenance to staff and community members and providing training to community members in harvesting, drying, canning and freezing. Through these activities people will be incorporating fresh locally grown foods into their household meals and community events. The price of fresh vegetables will be cheaper and the school will have a program to instill pride and ownership in the existing facilities. We believe that in the future by developing curriculum materials and resources, all children attending school will have access to information, training and opportunities to grow and learn to enjoy healthy food grown in the community.





**NFMCCC
funding**

- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To increase access to affordable and locally grown organic food options, to use greenhouse technology to extend the growing season and to recruit community members to be active in learning.

> LOCATION

Poplar River First Nation is located on the east shores of Lake Winnipeg. It is a fly-in community with winter road access. Poplar River is home to approximately 1,700 people.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Youth at greenhouse grand opening. [2] Youth watering plants in the garden. [3] [4] Community members checking out the plant selection in the greenhouse. [5] Youth with flower pots. [6] Outside the greenhouse. [7] Youth tending to the garden. [8] Repotting plants in the greenhouse.

Photos by Leon Simard.





SHAMATTAWA FIRST NATION:

Shamattawa Chicken Project

Food prices in Shamattawa are very high and the quality of food available is not very good, especially since the grocery store burnt down in the fall of 2016. People often cannot afford good food when it is available. There are also limited opportunities for young people to learn new skills and be involved in positive activities. The chicken project is a response to both of these needs.

Chicken coops were built with support from friends and family. We used a mixture of local and shipped materials to build the first coop and fence. When the chickens arrived they attracted a lot of interest and one person ran home and built a small coop, returning to pick up ten chickens the next day. 47 chickens out of 50 were raised and harvested. People were happy to see that it was possible to raise chicken in their community and continue to speak about it with pride. The coop became a place for young people to come visit and many of them helped out with feeding and watering. Along with youth, adults helped out when the main chicken raisers were away. Some community members are now looking to raise chickens for themselves, possibly take over the maintenance of the current coops and share the workload. Chickens were processed and shared with 12 families, plus the two families who raised them.

There were some initial challenges getting the coop built in time because of the weather, as well as ensuring the chicken feed was properly stored, as it had to come up the winter road. The

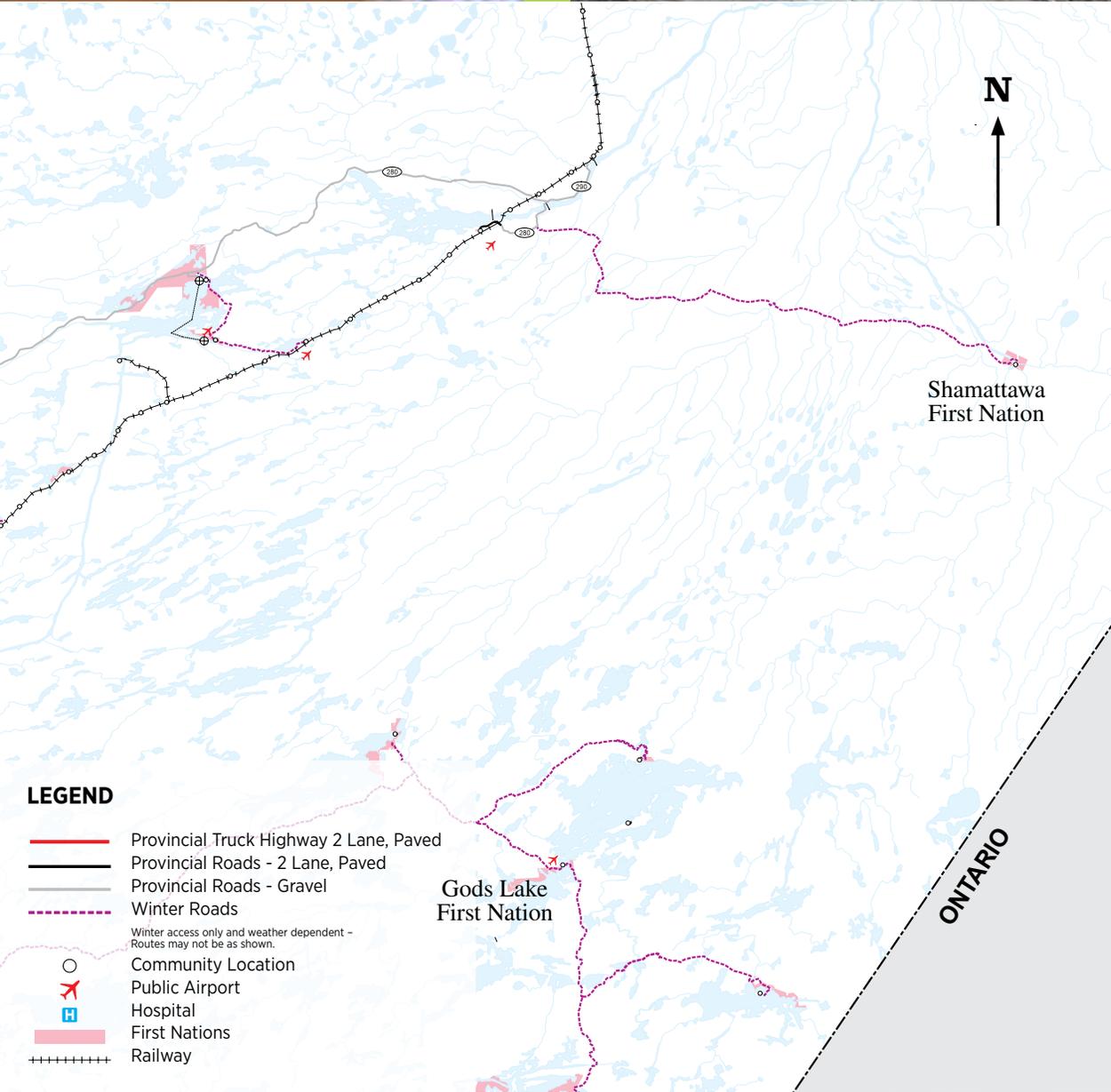
fencing itself wasn't complete until after the chicks arrived. Although the coop attracted lots of attention and excitement, some young people broke-in and hurt a half-dozen chickens in the first six weeks. Fortunately those chickens were able to be cooked and eaten, even if they didn't reach the full size. For the main family raising chickens, it was a full-time commitment. While they were able to get some help from friends and family, it did make it more difficult for them to go out to camp. The summer is an important time to go out on the land to camp and tending the chickens will be a challenge if it prevents people from going. Shipping in feed and bedding was decided to make the initial year easier while the new chicken raisers got a feel for the work of raising chickens, but going forward it is important to the raisers and Food Matters Manitoba to find more local sources of bedding and feed. This would keep costs down as well as involve and benefit more people in the community.

Along with the new recreation programs and gardens, the chicken project is often talked about as something that is going well for Shamattawa. People struggle through many challenges, often so many that it can become overwhelming. Starting and continuing these types of initiatives is key to creating hope and finding a way forward. The chickens themselves are said to be the tastiest and chubbiest chickens that people in Shamattawa have seen. As they were shared with elders and families with kids, the chickens

clearly became a source of a good meal. This was at the very time the store had burned, leaving many people without access to fresh foods like chicken. Raising local chickens could become part of the way that people feed themselves, especially with gardening, moose and goose hunting, trapping, fishing and picking berries.

In the coming year, both coops have people to take on the primary responsibility for raising chickens. Food Matters Manitoba will continue to provide support where needed, but most of the training will be passed between community members. Some people also talked about building their own coops and have gathered supplies. The Health Director will look at supporting chicken raising activities with newly hired youth workers. Again supplies will be shipped over the winter road, but chicken raisers will work with Food Matters Manitoba and the youth workers to find good sources of food and bedding, through such ways as: seeding open spaces, collecting bedding materials and finding food scraps or trimmings. Local sources could supplement and eventually replace supplies that need to be brought over the winter road. Keeping the chicken coops running opens the possibility of raising ducks and even egg laying hens. In order to set-up community chicken raising for the long-term, there has been talk about setting up a cooperative membership that could share the work, costs and of course the meat and eggs.





**NFMCCC
funding**

☑ 2016

> OBJECTIVES

To produce good local food and create the chance for youth to learn and participate in a good project.

> LOCATION

Shamattawa First Nation is located in the northeast corner of Manitoba. It is a fly-in community with a population of approximately 1,000 people.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Youth look on as the coop is constructed. [2] Baby chickens! [3] Sherri with the chicks. [4] Adult chickens. [5] Completed chicken coop.

“ It was a few hard months after the fire [grocery store and band office burned down] but things are looking up. I was able to feed families in need and they were surprised at how big the chickens were and how many people it would feed. ”

- Sheri Schweder



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SHERRIDON:

Sharing More Food from the Land

There is no grocery store in Sherridon and the trip to Flin Flon takes more than an hour when roads are good. Since 2014, the community has established a number of food focused projects to address this challenge. In 2014 a community fishing program was started, and a community chicken coop was built. In 2015 Kitchwapaw Clan Mothers' garden and a filleting shack were established and in 2016 the community built a smokehouse and acquired additional meat processing equipment. Food Matters Manitoba has been a helpful partner in this work. They have provided financial management of the grants, sourcing and arranging equipment and transportation.

The equipment and infrastructure is located on private property so that it can be monitored and kept secure. Even with these considerations, there have been challenges. In 2015, just as we were getting ready to harvest 200 mature chickens, all but one of the chickens were bird-napped in the middle of the night. This was very discouraging but didn't stop us from raising birds again the following year.

Building the chicken coop, filleting shack and smokehouse took help and some creative thinking. Neighbours and families worked together. Larry said of the smoke shack "Pearl's brother came and helped and the building was up in four days, including pouring the concrete pad. We piped the wood stove so that it could be used to heat the filleting shack when it is not being used in the smokehouse. This is better than purchasing two stoves and it wasn't hard to

move the small stove."

The food processing infrastructure is a gathering place. People who moved away 10 years ago for lack of work have come back to use the processing equipment and to visit. Stories are shared while fish and meats are being processed. Many of the people who were using it this year were people who grew up on that food and they had missed living on that kind of food. People were already complaining within a month that we should have gotten more fish and smoked more because their families were just gobbling it up. Fish patties made with ground fish were a particular hit with the kids.

Between fish, moose and caribou meat, approximately 1,600 pounds was smoked in the first season. The amount of food that is gathered and preserved is big. It reduces the amount of time and money people would otherwise have to spend leaving the community to go spend in the grocery store. The smokehouse keeps more of our resources locally.

Many people are remembering their skills and even learning some new ones. There are not too many kids helping with the processing yet, though in the fall of 2016 when the NMFCCC funder group visited Sherridon, two local nine-year-olds, River and Steven, showed the visitors how to process chickens and fillet fish. We had 5 or 6 of the smaller kids (6 to 10 year olds) who were in with us helping make the sausage. They got to fill the grinder and make the sausage. One little girl was able to identify that it was moose meat just from smell of the

raw meat. Maybe this year we would work with the Youth Centre and the Kids Come First committee to do some workshops for the kids to learn this stuff.

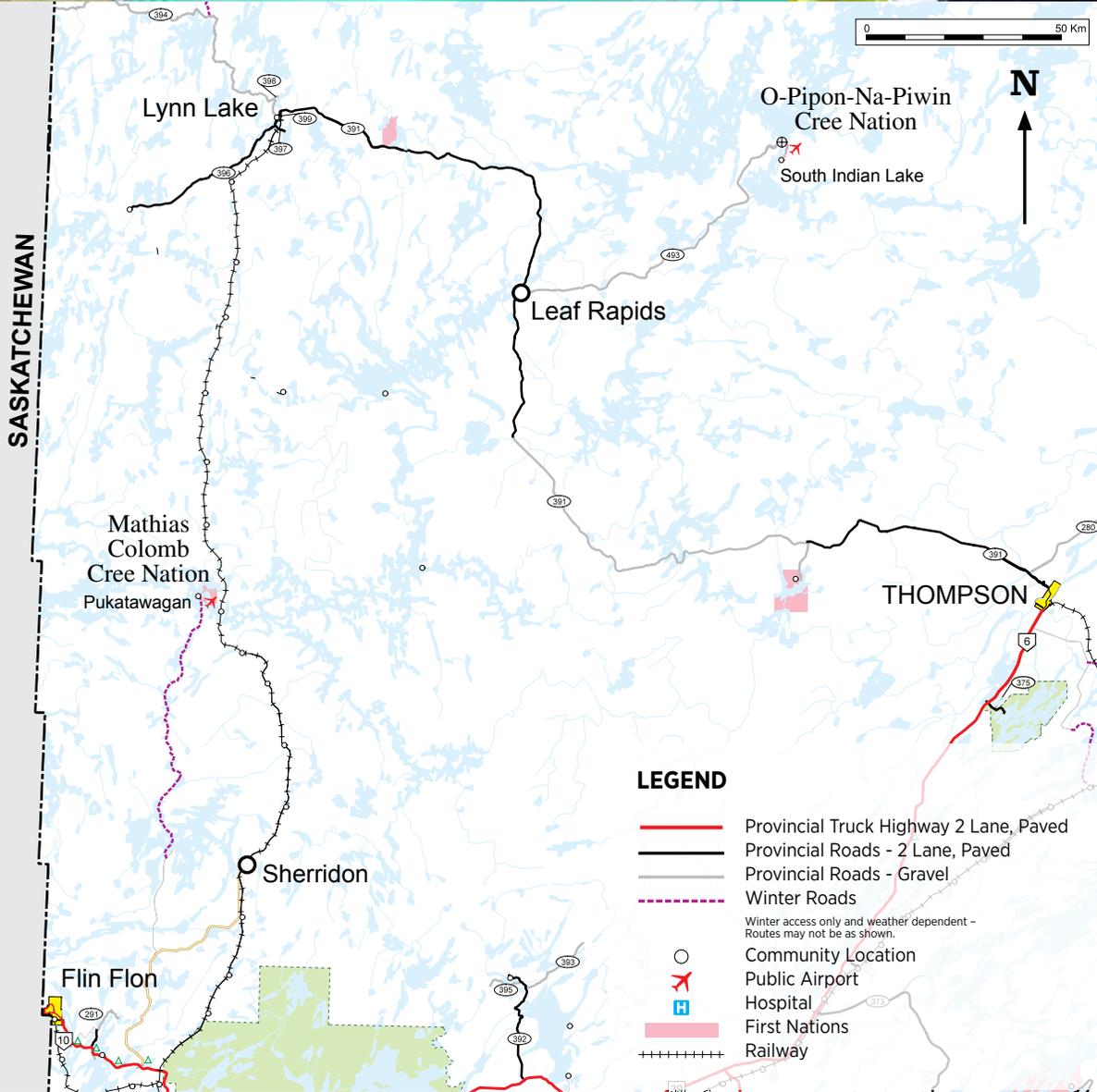
One of the challenges with these projects is maintaining consistent help and planning efforts. There is initial excitement when the chicks arrive, but while the chickens are growing the support from others tends to slow down. Come harvest time people are there to help. In 2017, for the smokehouse people are planning to go out and cut wood together so there isn't a shortage. There is a back-up propane system for the smokehouse but it leaves a different taste in the meat.

The community has struggled with how to advertise and share the food processing resources. Long standing divides between some families make community harmony an ongoing challenge. In 2016, the rules, expectations and procedures for requesting time of the smoke shack were posted at the community council office.

For the future there are plans to add a few more sets of racks to the smokehouse and hangers to hang sausage in there as well. That can be done with local materials. We also hope to get boarded community support and involve the Kids Come First committee in the projects by doing more workshops with the kids and teaching them how to use the tools. The chicken coop will continue to have about 200 birds per year, with people giving a small donation for the birds so that there is enough money to get chicks and feed for the following year.



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NFMCCC funding

- 2014
- 2015
- 2016

> OBJECTIVES

To make it easier for local people to access healthy, local foods.

> LOCATION

Sherridon is a post-mining town with a population of about 80 people. It is approximately 800 km north of Winnipeg and has all-year road access via a logging road where two-way radios are recommended.

> PHOTO DETAILS

- [1] Larry in the chicken coop.
- [2] Youth with a baby chicken.
- [3] People on the learning trip visiting the community chicken coop and smokehouse.
- [4] Tub of pickerel.
- [5] Youth showing off their catch.
- [6] Panorama of Kissinging Lake.

“ I feel good about the amount that the smoke house got used.

At one point it was used 10 days straight in the fall when we were smoking fish

- Larry Alm

It's getting so that people have much better access to good healthy food.

It made a big, big difference. ”

- Larry Alm



O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION / SOUTH INDIAN LAKE:

Ithinto Mechisowin Program

Ithinto Mechisowin means ‘food from the land’. This program responded to the community’s desire to return to traditional ways and improve community food security. The community champions believed that a food program inspired by OPCN’s land based food harvesting culture could be the way to fulfill and unite these two goals. Through Ithinto Mechisowin Program (IMP), the community food champions explored how this dream could be made a reality, under the wing of OPCN’s Tommy Thomas Memorial Health Complex and Community Care and Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative program. The Oscar Blackburn School (OBS), OPCN Band, Fishermen’s Association, Trappers Association have all been providing in kind support for the program since its inception. IMP is managed by a community committee that includes elders, teachers, health care professionals, fishers, and more.

IMP provides youth training on wild food and medicine harvesting, preparation, preservation and cooking techniques every season. Harvested and prepared food is shared with 350-400 people every month. Food is distributed every week based on the availability, need and

number of family members. A number of people with diabetes have self-reported that the regular intake of wild food has been keeping their blood sugar low, helping to lose weight and reduce hypertension. In addition, the weekly food distribution is helping people to boost their mental health. IMP office space has become a community social gathering place, especially for elders, youth and food champions. We believe this positive environment is contributing towards healing and bringing out courage to deal with everyday challenges that the community members have been facing since the hydro flooding and displacement in early 70s.

IMP runs workshops through the different seasons. The workshop helps OPCN people to reconnect with land and provide access to a healthy, culturally appropriate diet. We have seen growing interest and participation from youth, elders and adults to learn about different types of land based food and get seasonal food harvesting and medicine picking experience. We think the workshops are creating opportunities for more physical activity for the entire community which is required for a healthy lifestyle.

Workshops we do include: winter fishing, rabbit snaring, medicine picking, indoor gardening, goose hunting, berry picking, moose hunting, wild meat preparation and land safety skills.

Students from our community have been able to make participatory videos about their experiences and they have even travelled Canada and abroad to share what we are doing and how we are reclaiming our culture and health.

There are challenges to our program. These challenges include: staff turnover, limited funding and support, the challenges that local people face with poverty and health make it hard for them to participate regularly, weather can mess up our plans for harvesting and workshops, but we still continue. We consider IMP a testimony of indigenous strength and a validation for positive outcome of indigenous food sovereignty. IMP is a truly community driven initiative. John Bonner, former IMP coordinator said, “This program encourages people to get back on the land. It helps us recover from the shock of the flooding and all of the changes in the community that have happened.”





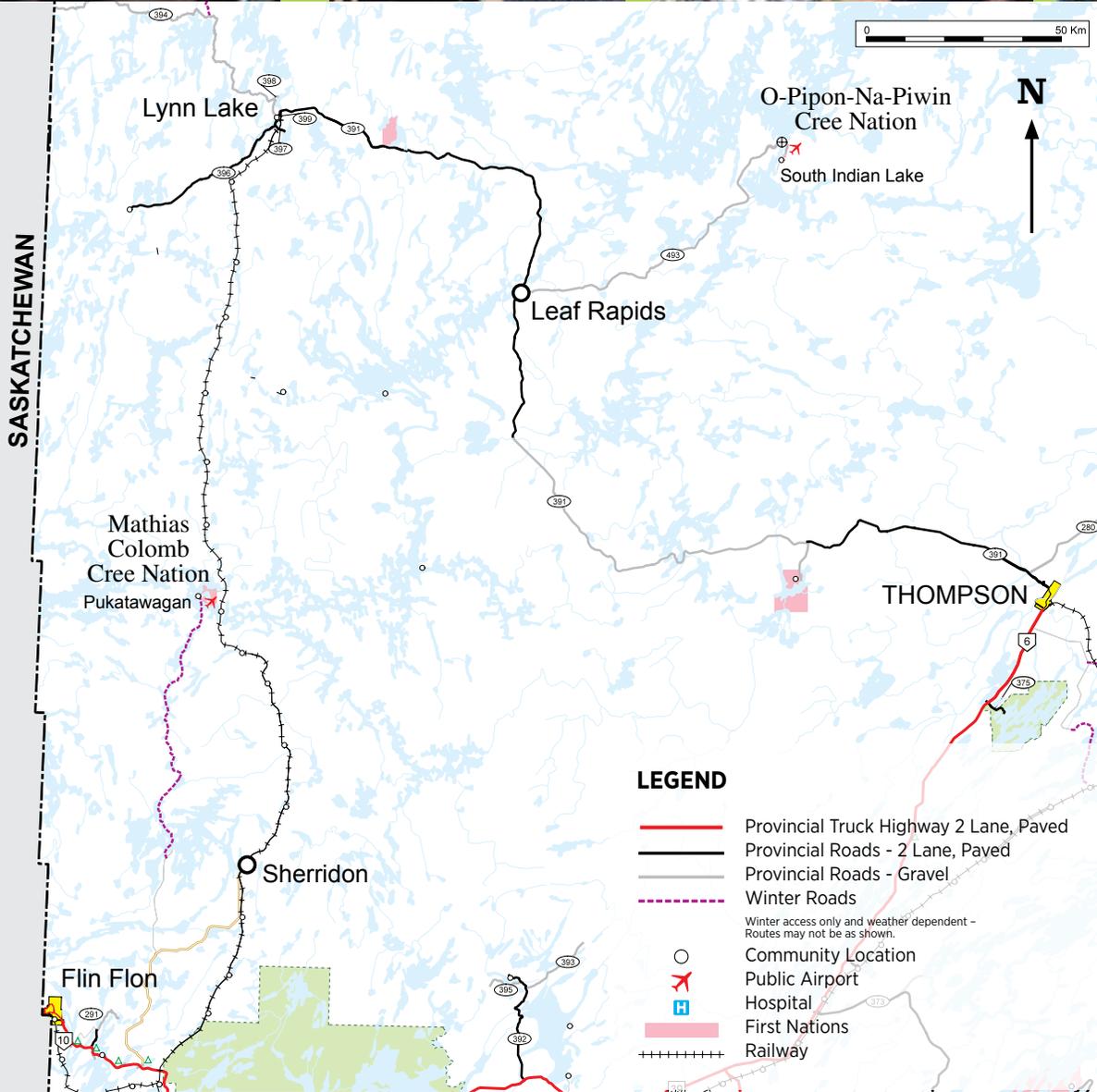
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NFMCCC funding

- 2013
- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To respond to the community's desire to return to traditional ways and improve community food security

> LOCATION

O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation (OPCN) (also known as South Indian Lake) is located on the southeast shores of Southern Indian Lake, about 130 km north of Thompson. It is home to approximately 1500 people.

“ It's [IMP] important because it's good for the indigenous diet because it allows us to connect to our cultural foods, good physical health, and for social interaction. People come around (IMP office) and talk about the hunting and the skills. Talk about where to hunt and best spots to go and get fish and moose. ”

- John Bonner, former IMP Program Coordinator

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Laughing & Cutting moose for IMP. [2] Youth smoking fish. [3] Rose Linklater showing off her country foods meal. [4] Elder Annie Spence [5] Rene Linklater, IMP chair showing food from the land for community members. [6] Nora Spence teaching goose plucking. [7] Youth Leader Howard Dumas teaching gardening skills. [8] The docks in South Indian Lake.



2016

Learning Trip

Each year representatives from our organizational partners and northern advisors of the NMFCCC take the time to visit communities we partner with for a 'learning trip'. In September 2016, we visited our community partners in Opaskwayak Cree Nation and Sherridon.

During these visits, NMFCCC members and community members have the opportunity to meet, share and celebrate the community-led efforts for food security, cultural reclamation, and related community economic development. We have the chance to observe firsthand, and sometimes even partake in the work being done on the ground. And we have the privilege of sharing with and learning from each other.

In addition to learning from our community partners, these trips are

an important opportunity to discuss and reflect on our collective work and how to improve our efforts to better serve communities.

A huge thank-you to our community partners from Opaskwayak Cree Nation and Sherridon, Manitoba that welcomed us, shared their experiences, taught us and kept us busy for the week! Words do not seem enough to express our gratitude.

These visits are more than a chance to learn about the project work or the individual communities. We have been taught by our northern advisors and have experienced ourselves, that the trips are essential in meeting each other, understanding each other, and ultimately shifting our worldviews so that we are more ready to work together. These visits help us all see with new eyes.

I have been thinking a lot about the trip over the last week, and thinking about the importance of slowness, relationships, and reciprocity in my other work and projects. The trip shifted my worldview a little, and I like that.

Highlights from Opaskwayak Cree Nation:

- Being greeted by the newly elected Chief & Council as well as members of the Community Garden project and elders from the community
- Spending time on the land and the water with community members and youth.
- Practicing our moose calling skills and sharing in a round dance
- Eating together at the main garden site under a beautiful tent and featuring local foods
- Visiting the community's 'LED Plant Factory' and considering different approaches to addressing food security

Highlights from Sherridon:

- Setting and pulling nets with local fisher Ernie Lapensee
- Learning about the history of orphaned mines in Manitoba from Becky
- Learning how the orphaned mine beside Camp Lake continues to really affect the people of Sherridon
- Pearl, Larry, Steven and River teaching us how to kill and clean chickens
- Ernie teaching us how to clean fish
- Visiting abandoned core samples mine sites with Sheryl Matheson as well as getting a history lesson about the area and the town
- An amazing community dinner with about 25 local people

NMFCCC Conversations & Reflections:

- NMFCCC Theory of Change and Values
- Food Sovereignty, what does it mean to us? What does it mean to northern communities?
- What role might we play in advocacy work regarding issues that affect communities (for example orphaned mines)
- Reflections on the daily experiences and conversations
- Food Matters Manitoba sharing their partnership approach with communities

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Pike Lake, Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN). [2] Rhonda and Joan helping Pearl clean chickens in Sherridon. [3] Jennifer, Daniel, Ervin and Andi, winners of the moose calling contest in OCN. [4] River and the chickens. [5] Going canoeing on Pike Lake. [6] Campfire and sharing circle with community youth at Pike Lake. [7] Sigrid and Beth cleaning chickens in Sherridon.



[LEFT TO RIGHT] Back row: John Nasekapow, Sara Hsiao, Peggy Wilson, Francine's daughter, Beth Hunter, Iris Vaisman, Elder Margaret Villeneuve, Elder Audrey Gareau, Hilda Dysart, Ervin Bighetty, Rhonda Taylor, Daniel Kanu, Louanne Beaucage, Jennifer Flett, Jennell Majeran, Maggie Flett, Alex Wilson, Todd Jaques, Noreen Singh and daughter, Andi Sharma, Sigrid Isford, Jamie Moore Front Row: Grandchild, Becky Cook, Francine Young, Moneca Sinclair, Joan Vanduzer, Julie Price, Jane Rabinowicz



“ Meeting community members and spending time in their spaces, while learning about the history of the community, gives me further understanding of the diversity of contexts, challenges and opportunities that exist in different communities. This humbles me a lot, teaches me about language, relationship building and hopefully allows me better support all the work we do. ”



**QUOTES FROM
NMFCCC
PARTICIPANTS:**

“ I’m always honoured, humbled and excited to spend time in communities learning, listening, sharing and making new friends... I wish more people had the opportunity to have these experiences. ”

“ I like to hear from the community, to understand what they find encouraging, challenging. ”



“ Our group was special – each brought something different to the mix and there was an open, sharing feeling. ”



“ My overall feeling is of gratefulness for having been able to take the time, and have the resources, for this experience. It feels like a rare privilege – not simply to go to these remote places with their natural and human beauty, but to have doors opened and connections made... ”



“ The trip was amazing. I feel that I have learned and been inspired to continue trying to help others and see things through their vision and not my own. I believe the collaborative can be so much more than a funding operation, there is so many communities that need our help and need our support, even if that support isn't money. ”



NORTH-TO-NORTH learning exchanges

GROW NORTH GARDEN AND GREENHOUSE 2016

Learning Exchange

Over 50 people from 20 different communities gathered in Leaf Rapids for Grow North 2016, a greenhouse and gardening conference. Participants engaged with local community members and attended sessions that furthered their understanding of gardening and greenhouses while learning about the projects that other communities are working on.

The conference was led by Chuck Stensgard from Frontier School Division, Kendelle Fawcett from the University of Manitoba, Tim Stevenson and Nicole Lamy from Food Matters Manitoba, and Julie Price from Northern Manitoba Food, Culture & Community Collaborative. The conference was an opportunity to bring together communities from northern Manitoba to learn about greenhouses and gardening, with an emphasis on boreal forest gardening. It was built on hopes that the knowledge would help those who have gardening projects going and for those who want to start projects.

> PHOTO DETAILS

- [1] Julie, Cassandra and Becky with strawberry plants.
- [2] Group having lunch at the Leaf Rapids Education Centre.
- [3] Chuck giving a tour of the garden area.
- [4] Chris Brayley helps with the seed saving workshop.
- [5] Outside the greenhouse at Leaf Rapids Education Centre.
- [6] Carol and Becky thinning out plants in the strawberry patch.
- [7] Having lunch.
- [8] Ervin and Wendy transplanting.





5

“ Food is the second biggest thing to language that makes us who we are. ”

PARTICIPANTS QUOTES:

“ It is part of our culture to raise our own food, to hunt and gather. We talk about defining a nation, food security is part of that. ”



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“ Something for me that we are going to consider is the seed saving program, for both community, home, and the gardening group. Then we don't have to depend on anyone to provide us with seeds. ”



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“ I really liked... hearing about what can grow in the boreal north and the technical details of how to grow different plants. I was amazed at the diversity of the vegetables you can grow and the diversity of the food production methods. ”

NORTH-TO-NORTH learning exchanges



COUNTRY FOODS PROGRAM 2016 Learning Exchange

HOSTED BY: O-PIPON-NA-PIWIN CREE NATION, ITHINTO MECHISOWIN PROGRAM

WITH SUPPORT FROM: NISICAWAYASIIK CREE NATION, COUNTRY FOODS DISTRIBUTION CENTRE

The second north-to-north learning exchanges that we supported was in June 2016. The Ithinto Mechisowin Program, Food Matters Manitoba, the Nelson House Country Foods Program, and the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture & Community Collaborative worked together to make this event happen. People from eight communities attended: O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation/South Indian Lake, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation/Nelson House, Barren Lands First Nation/Brochet, Thicket Portage, Wabowden, Kinosa Sipi Cree Nation/Norway House, God's Lake First Nation/God's Lake Narrows and Misipawistik Cree Nation/Grand Rapids. We gathered together to learn about

the different programs built around the tradition of sharing food with each other.

We spent three days visiting with and learning from the Ithinto Mechisowin Program (Food from the Land) Committee in O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation (OPCN). We also had the opportunity to take part in the Heritage Day celebrations when Elders from OPCN teach the next generation about wild foods, language and culture.

On our way back south, we stopped for a tour of the Nelson House Country Foods building and at the Leaf Rapids Grow North Horticulture garden and greenhouse.

> PHOTO DETAILS

[1] Rainbow over camp on the Island (old settlement). [2] Carol teaching Carolyn about medicines. [3] Group outside Oscar Blackburn School. From left to right top row: Julie Price, Marie Brightnose, Sarah Chee, Cassandra Bighetty, Daniel Kanu, bottom row: Carol Sanoffsky, Nicole Lamy, Becky Cook, Al Linklater, Fred Hart, Doug Hart, Fraser Spence, Amanda Karst. [4] Youth and collaborative members learn about preparing moose meat for drying. [5] Feasting with local foods. [6] Carol waiting for the boat.





“ There was so much traditional food. It was really good. ”



PARTICIPANTS QUOTES:

“ What I liked about the event is when we were out in the actual First Nations community in the north. It is very rare that any conference is held up north on a reserve. The amount of information that the elders had about the lands and hunting was beyond what I was expecting. ”

“ I liked how the people are involved in the country foods program –it’s not just a handout. People all work together. Cutting meats and harvesting foods together. There is a lot of volunteering for the program which is good. ”

“ It was inspiring to see it, and to think about how other communities can do programs like that [...] it is really organized and well run. ”



“ It was good. When are we getting together again? ”

“ The hosts at SIL were so amazing and generous and hospitable. They were really the best. I loved being there with them. I felt so welcomed. ”

“ I really enjoyed everyone coming together and other communities showing and sharing their experiences in what they have been doing. It was really interesting to see they were so intrigued and interested in what we were doing. ”

northern advisors



ERVIN BIGHETTY

Northern Advisor
Leaf Rapids

I am Ervin Bighetty. I am a continuous learner of the importance of growing and maintaining healthy fresh food. I have worked in a garden for 8 years, my duties consisted of maintaining the ground and clearing more area for garden beds. I worked with Chuck Stensgard my mentor and friend and alongside Christopher Brayley my closest friend, both of these guys have taught me and have molded the person that I am today. They helped me learn and understand the importance of teamwork, work ethic, and the power of gardening. I have been recruited by Julie Price to join the NMFCCF to provide input and strive for a better tomorrow for everyone in Manitoba and possibly for the world. I am the filler of the gap that splits the north from the south and helper of delivering the knowledge of gardening and cultural differences.

I continue to help with the project because I know that we can make a difference for everyone. If we continue what we are doing, we may very well make a tomorrow that is brighter for the current and future generations that are to come. The project has a lot of potential to make all of Manitoba closer and help remove the sicknesses like diabetes, obesity, etc. that are ever so present in Northern communities. I know that we can help change the current lifestyles of many in that live in the North, because healthy food isn't affordable or not available. I know we will help everyone learn how to make a garden, better their health, and become a sustainable community.

The Collaborative is made up of funder organizations, in-kind support organizations and Northern Advisors. Northern Advisors offer their local and cultural knowledge to provide critical insight about how best to partner with and develop relationships with northern communities in the movement towards food sovereignty. They also participate in crafting the strategic direction of the Collaborative. We offer our gratitude for the continued guidance of the Northern Advisors. Chi-Meegwetch, Ay Ay and Thankyou.



HILDA DYSART

Northern Advisor
South Indian Lake



JIM BEARDY

Northern Advisor
Thompson



MONECA SINCLAIR

Northern Advisor
Winnipeg/Mosakihikan



SOFIA RABLAUSKIAS

Northern Advisor
Poplar River

I am from South Indian Lake and have lived here all of my life. I have been involved with many community committees and am involved in all aspects of our community life. I have always lived off the land and for as long as I can remember my family has had gardens. I am one of the founding steering committee members of Ithinto Mechisowin Program, a food sovereignty program in our community. I enjoy working with youth and have worked at the school for 32 years as the school counselor.

I help out with the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture & Community Collaborative because I was really interested in having the traditional foods coming back to the community and finding ways to help them come back. I am grateful for all of the different organizations that have decided to work together to help out in my community and so many others in northern Manitoba. It's better to work together.

I've been with Keewatin Tribal Council for close to 24 years. That's where my heart lies. With the Cree and Dene communities that we serve. I'm Cree myself from the York Factory First Nation. I help out with the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture & Community Fund because it's an opportunity to provide input, share knowledge and to learn from others that have similar interests. I know the work they are doing is important and will benefit the small, northern and Aboriginal communities they target.

My name is Moneca Sinclaire and I am Cree originally from The Pas and Moose Lake areas. My family moved to Thompson when I was seven years old and lived here until I finished grade 12. Shortly after high school I became involved as a volunteer with food security issues in the north end of Winnipeg and now in the North area of Manitoba.

I was born and raised in Poplar River, Manitoba. I grew up with the teachings from my parents and grandfather, they taught me the importance of the land and life on that land that the creator has given to us. They taught me the importance of living off the land from the animals, birds, plants and water, that sustain our health, and the importance of always showing respect for that life. This has led me to continue to work on the protection of the land and to pass on this knowledge to our future generations.

Currently I work for Pimachiowin Aki World Heritage Project, which includes our traditional territory, that will provide, when approved, a strong protection for our land and our way of life.



The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security is building a national movement to protect seed biodiversity, keep seed widely available to the public, and promote ecological farming. The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security is a project of USC Canada, one of Canada's longest-standing international cooperation organizations. USC Canada is focused on food sovereignty, biodiversity, farmers' rights, and ecological agriculture and works in the field and on policy in 12 countries around the world. USC Canada is committed to respecting the leadership of the people heart of resilient food systems – women, Indigenous peoples and small-scale farmers. The team is excited to support the strong leadership of communities across Northern Manitoba to build healthy food systems. We are committed to listening and learning in order to be a good partner, standing in solidarity with the local leaders doing the important work on the ground.



We believe it is imperative that all Canadians work to bridge the divide between First Nations and Immigrant peoples. Many First Nations people, particularly those on the Reserves, are seeking ways to regain their strength and health, and to build stronger communities. The NMFCCC starts by listening to community members and working with them as they develop plans to improve their own lives. Making grant money and on-going support available to Northern communities are critical contributions to a pathway towards a better way of life. The Blennerhasset Family Foundation is honoured to be able to help with this initiative.

An Anonymous Donor with a vision of people in our communities being healthy, educated and economically self-sufficient.

Valerie Elia Fund

Stockton Fergus Family Fund

collaborative funders

“If you want to go fast,
go alone. If you want to
go far, go together.”

African Proverb

Tides Canada

The mission of Tides Canada is to provide uncommon solutions for the common good by helping Canadians secure a healthy environment in ways that promote social equity and economic prosperity.

Tides Canada is a member of the NMFCCC and the administrative host. We provide human resources and communications support, legal oversight, and fund development while linking and promoting this work through our networks and donor communities.

We participate in the NMFCCC because we believe in the power of collective action, the wisdom of communities and the need for reconciliation in Canada. It is a privilege to learn with the partner organizations, the Northern Advisors and the communities.

It is amazing how one small grant can lead a foundation in new directions. For a long time I had felt that we funders should be paying more attention to the Canadian peoples who are struggling the most, but didn't know how to be involved. Then I met Shaun Loney and Darcy Wood who started Aki Energy and support Meecham Farm in Garden Hill First Nation, a remote fly-in community. They asked us to support an orchard for the project and we agreed.

A year later, I visited Garden Hill... Seeing is truly believing! A crowd had gathered to help with chicken harvesting. The orchard and berry bushes were thriving after the long winter. The top soil was being built up with waste fish.

In September 2016, under the leadership of NMFCCC staff Julie Price and Becky Cook, I joined the group for a 5 day visit to two communities. This learning curve was steep and left me with a passion to learn more. Discussions and exposure to local concerns and traditions made a huge impact on me.

What I learned:

- Communities have different environments, challenges and goals;
- Every community has its leaders, its strengths;
- An increased sensitivity to the dehumanizing effect and destruction of cultures caused by colonization and the residential school system
- The negative influence of government policies working against the efforts of the Indigenous people to be self-reliant (e.g. the underwriting of The Northern Stores with no support for production of food on reserves)

Harbinger Foundation has signed on with NMFCCC and with the Circle on Philanthropy, to be supportive of the development of Indigenous well-being. We are working through Tides Canada, following their recommendations regarding the best use of many small grants as requested by Indigenous communities.

THE J.W. McCONNELL FAMILY FOUNDATION

LA FONDATION DE LA FAMILLE J.W. McCONNELL

The Foundation's purpose is to enhance Canada's ability to address complex social, environmental and economic challenges. We accomplish this by developing, testing, and applying innovative approaches and solutions; by strengthening the community sector; and by collaborating with partners in the community, private, and public sectors. We recognize that creating enduring change takes time, and involves more than granting. The Foundation's current areas of focus and emerging initiatives include, Social Finance and Impact Investing, Sustainable Food Systems, Indigenous-Focused Philanthropy, Cities for People, and RECODE—catalyzing social innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education.



The Province of Manitoba is grateful for the opportunity to participate as a collaborative member. Our participation has enabled us to meet mutual goals of increasing access to healthy food and create opportunities for community economic development. We are looking forward to continued learning from the communities and from the diverse group of individuals who also participate in this important work.



The Sprott Foundation is dedicated to addressing homelessness and hunger in Canada. We support initiatives that enable self-sufficiency and dignity for those in need. We're particularly interested in new, untested, innovative approaches to addressing homelessness and providing fresh, healthy food.

THE THOMAS SILL FOUNDATION INC

Mr. Thomas Sill, C.A. lived in Winnipeg, was an astute investor who built a fortune, and in his last will established the foundation for charitable purpose which bears his name. The Thomas Sill Foundation provides grants throughout Manitoba in the areas of health, education, arts and culture, heritage and environment, and responses to the community.

The TSF is a member of this collaborative because everyone should have good food at reasonable cost. Nutritious food promotes health, but also contributes to happy families and peaceful communities. It results in better educational outcomes. We are also gratified when people learn the skills necessary to take care of themselves and reduce costs as a result of their own sweat equity. Good, affordable food tastes great and it comes with so many fringe benefits.



The Winnipeg Foundation's mission is to be a catalyst for strengthening community well-being, now and for future generations, by promoting philanthropy, creating partnerships and supporting diverse charitable organizations. The Foundation is part of a network of community foundations that support communities across Canada.

We've been pleased to partner in the collaborative as a way to expand our understanding of food security in Northern communities. We've been inspired by the grassroots initiatives that are helping ensure all Manitobans have access to fresh, healthy food.

WELCOMING TO THE NMFCCC IN 2017



feed opportunity

Maple Leaf Centre for Action on Food Security

The Maple Leaf Centre for Action on Food Security is a registered not-for-profit organization that works collaboratively with stakeholders to reduce food insecurity in Canada and globally. It is seeking to raise the profile of this pressing social issue; advocate for critical policies and invest in programs required to make sustainable improvements. The Centre works with innovative food-based programs, such as NMFCCC, that advance the capacity of people and communities to achieve sustainable food security and have the potential to build scale and impact. It also supports learning, networking and measurement to assess program impact, advance knowledge sharing more broadly and replicate and scale innovation that works. Its goal is to Feed Opportunity, by advancing the ability of people and communities to achieve sustainable food security



SUPPORTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES IN
NORTHERN MANITOBA THROUGH GOOD
FOOD AND RESILIENT LOCAL ECONOMIES

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