

NMFCCC Funding

✓ 2015

Lac Brochet Ice Fishing

Location **Lac Brochet/Northlands Dene First Nation** is near the Saskatchewan border. It is at the same latitude as Churchill, Manitoba. Lac Brochet has a population of 629 and a median age of just under 20 years old. It is the most northern community in Manitoba with no permanent road or rail connection to other parts of Manitoba.

Objective To build youth skills and knowledge on fishing and strengthen cultural values in the community by deepening the connection to traditional food and the land it comes from.

In partnership with the local Health Centre and local school, skilled fishers from the community received an honorarium to take groups of students out on educational fishing trips. Workshops on processing and preserving fish occurred in home-economic classes at the school. A portion of the fish caught were shared with families of the students and the remainder stored in the community freezer for the community to use.

Successes

- Fishing trips filled two freezers with fish, including: mariah, pickerel, trout, and jack and white fish.
- Fish were shared with over 20 elders and used for the winter festival and other promotional events.
- Youth participated in the project by helping with cleaning, filleting and distribution of fish to Elders.
- Fish nets and equipment purchased for the project continue to be used for the summer and upcoming winter seasons.

Challenges

- Youth were unable to go on the fishing trip due to very cold weather.
- Unpredictable weather and people's schedules made coordinating ice fishing trips difficult.
- Maintaining equipment; a broken auger had to be replaced by plane during a trip.

“ *Fishing is one of the best sources of healthy food for Lac Brochet.* ”

Next Steps

- Include youth in future fishing trips to transfer skills and deepen their cultural values.
- Expand the supply from trips to provide more country foods for Elders and community events.
- Find other sources of funding to increase opportunities for youth participation in traditional food practices.

“ *Reliance on food from the land is part of the way of life... and has ensured that community members continue to live long healthy lives with lower rates of diabetes and other food-related illness than most remote communities.* ”

