



## Northern Project Leaders Gathering and Northern Manitoba Food, Culture, and Community Collaborative Learning Trip 2018



Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation/Nelson House  
October 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018

This year Northern Manitoba Food, Culture, and Community Collaborative and Food Matters Manitoba combined their Learning Trip and Grow North Conference, respectively, to bring organizational partners, northern advisors, and northern project leaders together.

The gathering was originally set to take place in War Lake First Nation, a small community along the Bayline Railway, but after a derailment near The Pas, Manitoba, the railway was closed for inspection and repair. With the community of War Lake on our minds, the gathering was relocated to Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation.

Many thanks to Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation for hosting our large group at such short notice. An extra special thank-you to the Moodie family, Alexandria, Edna, and Lou, for helping to organize accommodations, catering delicious meals, and welcoming us all so warmly.

And finally, thank you to each of you for taking the time and travelling the distance to attend this gathering. Thank you for sharing, learning, listening, caring for each other, and supporting each other. Thank you for your patience, grace, and stepping up to roles that you may not have anticipated. Everyone came together and together made the gathering be the great occasion it was.



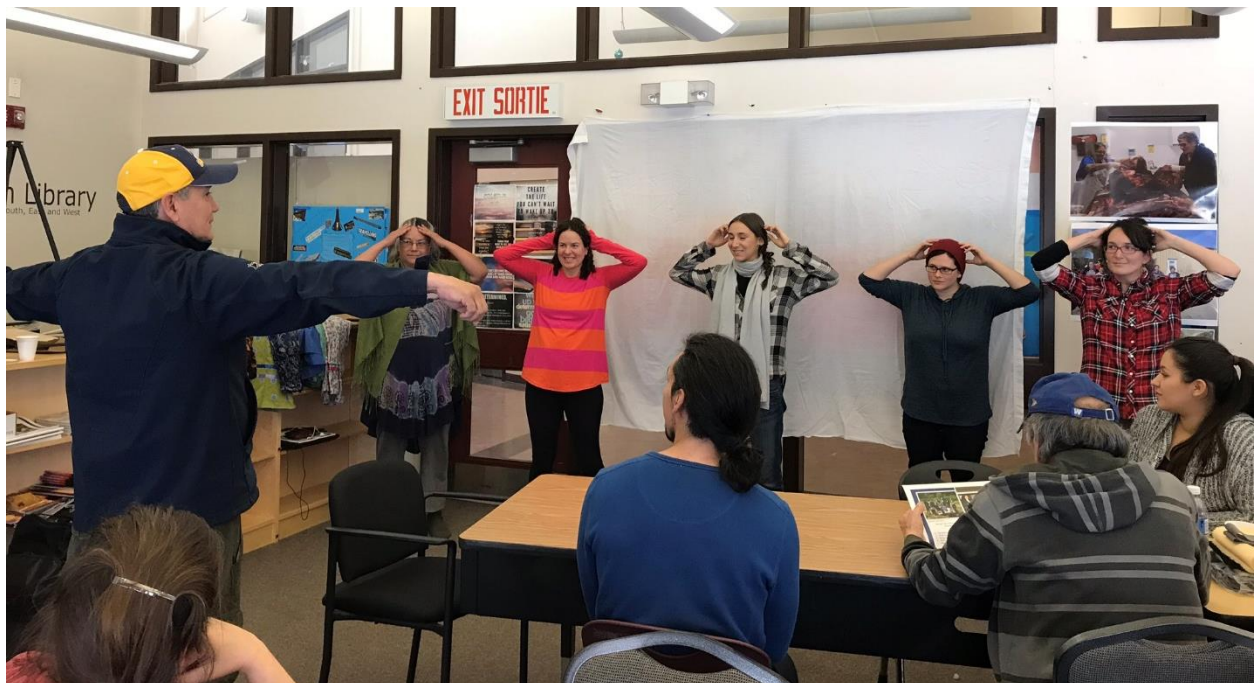
Cover Photo: Melody Chuckrey (Community School Connector), Howard Dumas, Marie Brightnose, Sheri Schweder, Julie Segal, Myrtle Fourre, and Tammy McGrath during the Wapanohk Community School Visit

Above: The land in Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (L) The medicines ever present at the gathering.

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Audrey, Sarah, Julie, Amanda and Daphne were the finalists in a competitive game of 'Simon Says' led by Lou Moodie.

*"I am happy to have been invited to this gathering and to have met so many wonderful people. The information that was shared made me feel good that there are so many people that want to make the north and the world a much better place."*



## Gathering Itinerary

### Thursday, October 11<sup>th</sup>

Arrivals to Thompson

Check-ins at Mystery Lake Hotel

Dinner at Hub of the North

### Friday, October 12<sup>th</sup>

Breakfast at Mystery Lake Hotel

Opening introductions and sharing

Lunch at Mystery Lake Hotel

Wapanohk Community School Visit:

- fire starting
- traditional medicines
- beekeeping
- community walk
- Cree language class

Travel to Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

Settle in at Atoskiwin Training & Employment Centre

Dinner

Thanking Ceremony



*Fire starting and roasting marshmallows with Wapanohk students*



*Opening Circle. L-R: Carl, Caroline, Donna, Myrtle, Fred, Julie S., Nicole, Andi, Hilda*

### Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>

Breakfast

Wrap-around moccasin making – Donna Sanoffsky

Project sharing

Lunch – catered by Edna Moodie

Motivational Speaker – Lou Moodie

Gifts from Our Elders Video and Discussion – Sofia Rabilauskas  
Sweat Ceremony - led by Felix Walker  
Dinner – catered by Edna Moodie  
Project Sharing  
Group trading session

#### Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup>

Breakfast  
Seven Teachings Activity – Myrtle Fourre  
Project sharing  
Lunch  
Manitoba Hydro Impacts on Nelson House and Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation – Lou Moodie  
Project Sharing  
Dinner – Catered by Edna Moodie  
Manitoba Hydro Impacts on Nelson House and Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation – Dr. Ramon Neckoway  
Sharing Circle and Closing

#### Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup>

Breakfast  
Departures for home



Left: Julie Segal and Daphne Wellman working on wrap-around moccasins  
Middle: Andi Sharma and Jennell Majeran prepping vegetables for dinner  
Right: Fred Hart and Nicole Lamy with Ithinto Mechisowin Program calendar

## Gathering Summary

Thursday evening dinner at Hub of the North was start of our four days together in Northern Manitoba. The dinner was a good preview of what the next few days would hold as there was much laughter, sharing, meeting new people, and talk about future plans. We ended the evening by celebrating Andi's birthday before everyone headed off to rest up after a long day of traveling.



*Andi and Donna*

On Friday we started our morning with an opening by Fred Hart of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, to acknowledge the territory and history of the land that our gathering was taking place in.

Following Fred's words, a circle sharing of introductions and thoughts about the gathering took place. In the circle we shared thoughts and ideas about the gathering, the work, and the future. The circle offered a rich start to our time together.

After lunch we visited Wapanohk Community School and took part in activities with some of the students. One group joined students outside to learn about fire starting and got to roast marshmallows once the fire was going. Another group joined in on a Cree Language class and learned about respect. Two groups were led by northern project leaders – Caroline Sanoffsky led a traditional medicines session, while Myrtle Fourre talked about bee keeping with another class. The final group went on a walk around Thompson as students looked for large numbers that could be found in the community.

"Our children are our future that's why when I see people working with our youth, I know we are going to keep our goals alive, our teachings, our knowledge. That's what's so amazing. So, if we all keep working as a team, we got this; not even Donald Trump can stop us."



Left: Students learning about respect during their Cree language class



Top Right: One of the seven teachings painted at Wapanohk

Bottom Right: Fire starting class during the school visit





After our time at Wapanohk, we travelled to Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation/Nelson House for the remainder of the gathering. Before leaving Thompson, we received news that the family that was helping to organize and cater meals had just experienced a loss, but they still wanted us to come and host our gathering as planned.

Upon arrival at the Atoskiwin Training & Employment Centre (ATEC), everyone got settled, explored, and we set up for the next couple of days. People pitched in to get dinner ready and we sat down to share another meal.

The last activity of the day was the Thanking Ceremony. It was a time to acknowledge the effort, investment and vision that each northern project leader brings to their community. Each northern project leader was presented with a gift from the collaborative, as well as a personal gift from one of the funders. There were many kind words, appreciation, and gratitude for each other shared.



Above Left: Sigrid and Daniel as he models his gift

Center Left: Hilda receives a gift from Julie

Center Right: Julie presents Carl with a gift

Above Right: Andi and Asfia with our dinner

Right: Gifts ready for the Thanking Ceremony



On Saturday morning, Donna taught interested people how to make wrap-around moccasins until the project leaders sharing session began. During the project sharing each leader shared about the projects that they are involved with in their communities and there was some good discussion and questions around each.



After lunch Lou Moodie gave a motivational speech, read our minds, and led a challenging game of Simon says. A video, *Gifts from Our Elders* was shared by Sophia Rabilauskas which featured Elders from Poplar River sharing their residential school experiences. This was an emotional session as other shared about their experiences and talked about how it has impacted them and their families. Following a break, much of the group headed to a Sweat Lodge Ceremony led by Felix Walker.

The day's final session was Carl McCorrister and Audrey Logan's trading opportunity. Carl and Audrey started it off by talking about traditional trade routes and how trade sustained people on Turtle Island since time immemorial. There was a buzz of excitement, connecting, and laughs as people walked around the room showing others the items they brought to trade and making offers with each other

"One of my favorite memories was the Trading Post session that Carl and Audrey led. It was really cool to think about the way our ancestors used to trade and get around in Manitoba."



Top Left: Asfia Kamal and Leon Simard sharing a laugh during the trading session. Top Right: Myrtle Fourre and her painted rocks for trade. Bottom Left: Tammy McGrath and Audrey Logan showing off their trades. Bottom Right: Carl McCorrister and Fred Hart with their trades of honey and tobacco seeds.



Seven Teachings activity led by Myrtle kicked off Sunday morning as we learned about the Seven Teachings and made a wood hanging with each teaching on it. The rest of Sunday morning was spent listening to few more projects and learning about the ways in which that the projects impact the communities involved.

After another delicious meal put together by Edna Moodie, there was a discussion about the impacts that Manitoba Hydro has had on the community, and the land around it. The final couple projects were shared in the afternoon and a lovely group photo was taken. After dinner, Dr. Ramon Neckoway, who was scheduled to do a presentation on Manitoba Hydro Impacts on Nelson House and Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation in the afternoon, arrived and gave her presentation. Adding more information and a different perspective on MB Hydro.

The evening ended with a sharing circle where we reflected on the past few days with each other. We shared what we had learned, what we felt throughout the days, and the appreciation for each person there and those who were involved in helping the gathering be what it was. Many goodbyes were said as some of the group headed back to Thompson.

We woke up to a bit of a snow storm on Monday morning, but everyone was still able to depart and make it home safely after some delay.



Top Left: Seven Teachings Top

Middle: Daniel Gladu Kanu and Sophia Rabilauskas during the thanking ceremony.

Top Right: Wrap-around moccasins.

Bottom Left: Myrtle Fourre and seven teachings activity.

Bottom Right: Caroline Sanoffsky, Nicole Lamy, and Ervin Bighetty.

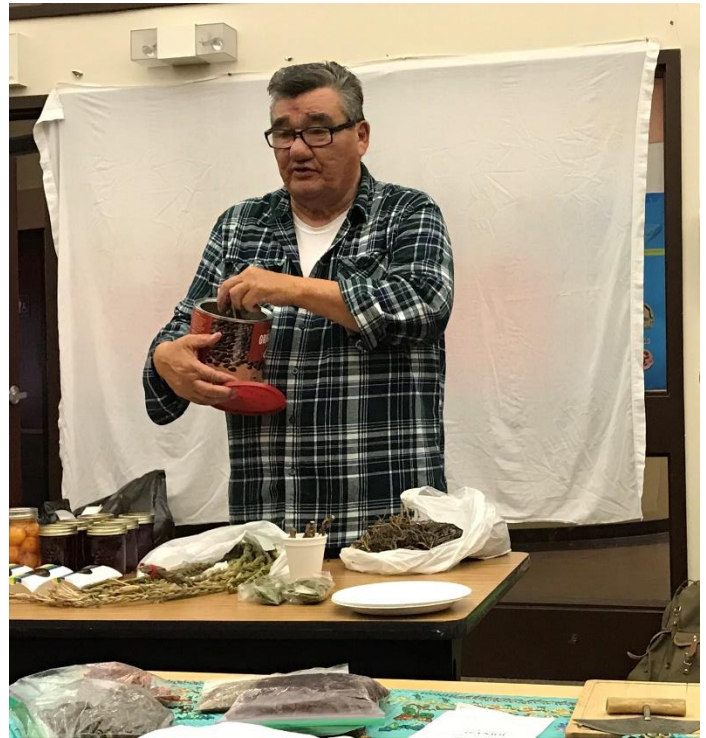


## Project Sharing

Carl McCorrister

Peguis Agricultural Project &  
Re-establishing Traditional Trade Routes

Producing vegetables, tobacco, and other experimental crops. Community market and working towards re-establishing traditional trading with other communities.



Sheri Schweder

Shamattawa Chicken Coop

Raising chickens in northern Manitoba.  
This year laying hens as well. Youth  
involvement in caring for the chicks.







Jackie Milne & Amber Lamalice

Northern Farming Training Institute

Farming in the Northwest Territories, food production to feed local people and compliment wild harvesting. Regenerative Agriculture that cares for the land, training and education facility.



Myrtle Fourre & Fred Hart

Northern Beekeeping Project

Care for bees and hives. Challenges and benefits of keeping bees in northern Manitoba. Working with schools and youth to spark interest. The waggle dance!







Brian Trewin, Howard Dumas, & Ervin Bighetty

Grow North: Northern Boreal Horticulture Centre

Researching and testing variety of seed, growing techniques, and use of local resources. Youth involvement and sharing of knowledge with other communities.

*"I think having the young leaders of Leaf Rapids really bring something special to the group."*

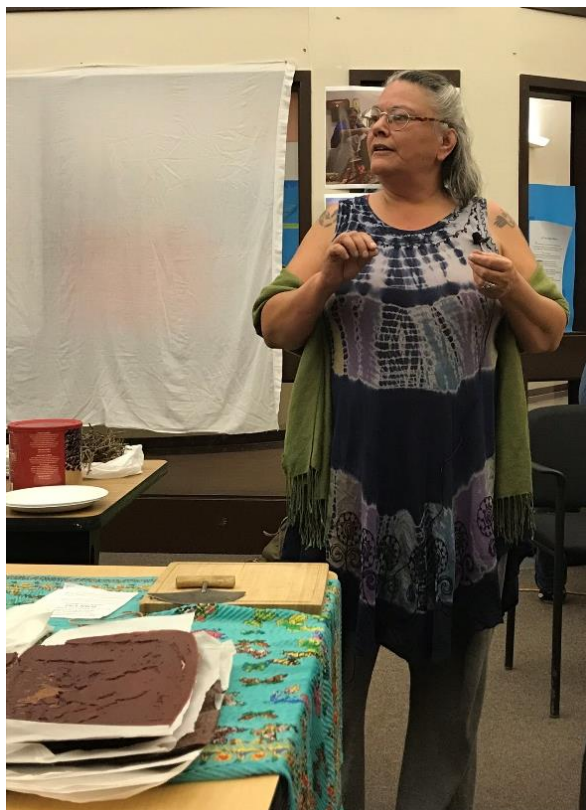


Caroline Sanoffsky

Traditional Teachings

Youth focused land-based education in traditional teachings. Medicines, trapping, teachings, and connecting to the land.





Audrey Logan

### Dehydration Nation & Trading

Dehydrating everything as ancestors used to. Health benefits, preserving, transportation ease, and food sovereignty. Connecting with others to trade all kinds of food and items.

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



Donna Sanoffsky & Marie Brightnose

### Bayline Food Buying Co-op

Community members order food, monthly food deliveries to communities. Challenges with accessibility and the importance of the co-op.







Leon Simard

Food Security in Manitoba First Nations

Review of many communities in action. Leon works with First Nations in Manitoba to support food security initiatives. Includes poultry, gardening, greenhouse and some traditional foods



Hilda Dysart, Raymond Michelle, & Asfia Kamal

Ithinto Mechisowin Program

Increasing access to land-based foods for community members. Focus on youth involvement through skill building and mentorship







Front Row (Left to Right): Edna Moodie, Jackie Milne

2<sup>nd</sup> Row: Julie Price, Myrtle Fourre, Caroline Sanoffsky, Sophia Rabilauskas, Fred Hart, Hilda Dysart, Carl McCorrister

3<sup>rd</sup> Row: Asfia Kamal, Andi Sharma, Amanda Froese, Tammy McGrath, Audrey Logan, Marie Brightnose, Nicole Lamy, Donna Sanoffsky, Amber Lanalice, Leon Simard, Daniel Gladu Kanu

Back Row: Lou Moodie, Julie Segal, Howard Dumas, Jennell Majeran, Ervin Bighetty, Sarah Stern, Daphne Wellman, Sigrid Isford, Iris Vaisman, Todd Jaques, Alexandria Moodie, Raymond Michelle, Brian Trewin

Missing: Sheri Schweder

“The little boy that I encountered in my first workshop I attended in Leaf Rapids, he was so interested, so helpful, was so involved, grew into a big man, and holy wow, is now Mayor of his community.”



## Participants

Name	Project/Organization	Community	Contact Number	Email
Jackie Milne	Northern Farm Training Institute	Hay River, Northwest Territories		jackie@nftinwt.com
Julie Price	Northern Manitoba Food, Culture, and Community Collaborative	Winnipeg, Manitoba	204.990.1215	julie.price@tidescanada.org
Myrtle Fourre	Northern Beekeeping, Traditional Teachings	Wabowden, Manitoba	204.689.2607	NONE
Caroline Sanoffsky	Traditional Teachings	Wabowden, Manitoba	204.679.2165	blrrt@outlook.com
Sophia Rabliauskas	Northern Advisor	Poplar River First Nation, Manitoba	204.244.2654	srabliauskas@hotmail.com
Fred Hart	Northern Beekeeping	Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Manitoba	204.484.2051	NONE
Hilda Dysart	Northern Advisor, Ithinto Mechisowin Program	South Indian Lake, Manitoba	204.374.2056	NONE
Carl McCorrister	Northern Advisor, Peguis Community Garden	Peguis First Nation, Manitoba	204.308.1240	carlmccorrister@hotmail.com
Andi Sharma	Northern Healthy Food Initiative	Winnipeg, Manitoba	204-230-2970	Andi.sharma@gov.mb.ca
Amanda Froese	Food Matters Manitoba	Winnipeg, Manitoba	204.229.1929	amanda.froese@tidescanada.org
Tammy McGrath	HRJ Consulting	Calgary, Alberta	403.660.6769	t.mcgrath@hrjconsulting.com
Audrey Logan	Dehydration Nation	Winnipeg, Manitoba	204.781.4550	loganaudrey13@gmail.com
Marie Brightnose	Bayline Food Buying Co-op	Thicket Portage, Manitoba	204.307.6941	NONE
Nicole Lamy	Canada Feed the Children	Winnipeg, Manitoba		nlamy@canadianfeedthechildren.ca
Donna Sanoffsky	Bayline Food Buying Co-op	Wabowden, Manitoba	204.679.5602	donnac2009@live.ca
Amber Lamalice	Northern Farm Training Institute	Hay River, Northwest Territories	867.876.1998	amberlynn.lamalice@gmail.com
Leon Simard	Manitoba First Nations Food Security	Winnipeg, Manitoba	204.947.2397	lsimard@fourarrowsrha.ca

Daniel Gladu Kanu	Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective	Winnipeg, Manitoba		daniel@lwic.org
Julie Segal	McConnell Foundation	Ottawa, Ontario	613.791.9263	jsegal@mccconnellfoundation.ca
Howard Dumas	Grow North Boreal Horticulture	Leaf Rapids, Manitoba	204-473-8609	
Jennell Majeran	Northern Healthy Food Initiative	Thompson, Manitoba	204-677-6677	Jennell.majeran@gov.mb.ca
Ervin Bighetty	Northern Advisor, Mayor of Leaf Rapids	Leaf Rapids, Manitoba	431.754.8588	ervinbighetty@gmail.com
Sarah Stern	Maple Leaf Centre for Action on Food Security	Mississauga, Ontario	905.285.1437	Sarah.stern@mapleleaf.com
Daphne Wellman	USC Canada	Ottawa, Ontario	613.668.0934	dwellman@usc-canada.org
Sigrid Isford	HRJ Consulting	Calgary, Alberta	403.909.0208	s.isford@hrjconsulting.com
Iris Vaisman	The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security	Edmonton, Alberta	204.889.6599	iris.vaisman@gmail.com
Todd Jaques	Tides Canada	Hamilton, Ontario		Tood.jaques@tidescanada.org
Alexandria Moodie	NCN Family & Community Wellness Centre	Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Manitoba	204.939.4041	amoodie@ncnwellness.ca
Raymond Michelle	Ithinto Mechisowin Program	South Indian Lake, Manitoba		NONE
Brian Trewin	Grow North Boreal Horticulture	Leaf Rapids, Manitoba	204.473.8883	brian.trewin@fsdnet.ca
Sheri Schweder	Northern Chicken Raising	Shamattawa First Nation, Manitoba	204.565.2548	sas1978@live.ca
Asfia Kamal		Winnipeg, Manitoba	204.995.4933	asfia.gulrukh@gmail.com

*“It is also a way of Reconciliation where our people have come through so much in terms of colonization; this reconciling must be with all parts of our society to rebuild new relationships and develop a vision together. I see this gathering doing this; as I stated, I am a residential school survivor and appreciate the healing and understanding from the sharing these gatherings bring.”*



## Learning Opportunities

### **Project Sharing**

A large portion of the gathering was listening to the northern project leaders share about the projects that they are involved in with their communities. This was an opportunity for us to put faces to names and projects and to learn more about the people behind the work. We learned about project histories, successes, and got an appreciation for the work that others are doing. We learned that many of the challenges that are faced in with the projects, and within communities are similar from place to place. People shared about how they work on the challenges that arise and there were some good ideas exchanged on how to navigate these challenges. With so many projects spanning across northern Manitoba and the North West Territories there was a lot of knowledge shared and learned from everyone in the room. There was talk and planning between project leaders, as well as funders, about how the knowledge gained from the project sharing can influence current and future projects, and how to bring this knowledge back to other colleagues and partners.

### **Relationship Building**

Seeing relationships being built during this gathering was a reminder about how important and necessary relations are, both in the implementation and support of projects. There was no shortage of relations built during this gathering, new and old alike. These relationships had, and will continue to have, much to teach everyone, and in a reciprocal way. The gathering was a great opportunity for people to come together who would most likely not have a chance otherwise to meet in person. There were also lessons learned about being a good partner within projects and as supporters and funders. Many hope to maintain these relationships, and feel they are relations that can be relied on and used in the near future.

### **Resilience**

The gathering felt like a continuous reminder about the resilience and strength found within people and communities. This gathering was challenging on several levels, from logistics and rescheduling, personal and community wide struggles, to historical and systemic trauma. Despite all of this, there was an overwhelming feeling of support and community during the gathering. People came together to help reorganize, to host, and to keep the gathering moving forward. There was also resilience throughout the projects that were shared, and within personal conversations that took place during down time. The involvement of youth and young leaders during the gathering was noted and an important lesson on supporting and nurturing these young people as they are already making a mark on and in their communities.

## Participant Quotes:

“How proud everyone was as they presented their projects... you do all this work because you love it and to help others, but you feel alone.... This gathering helped me to know about all the others out there.”

“The amazing stuff each community is doing to make our communities a better place was heartwarming”

“Since we all work on food security, arriving in a new community and being put to task right away on finding appropriate food to feed one’s self and others is a great way to get first-hand experience with what is available (or not available) in a given place.”

“I thought the coming together to prepare meals and share in clean-up chores was also good at showcasing different perspectives and skills related to food preparation and meal sharing culture.”

“having community members come welcome/talk with us despite the grief and sorrow the community was facing”

“the final circle displayed a lot of friendship and care towards each other”

“I am so proud to be associated with this great team that make things happen under any circumstance.”

“I loved hearing all the stories and knowledge from the communities and loved watching the smiles and nods and curiosity from the other community members.”

“It also seems to me that the NMFCCC as a collective and a collaborative and a unit, is strong. It seems to have come a long way in a short amount of time. It’s not disconnected communities doing work. It’s a network of supported communities and projects. It seemed like this gathering made it even more cohesive.”

“I did not experience any challenges, but I know if I had, the group would have been there to support me.”

“I guess the experiences from the gathering are already being used, just have to wait to see what the outcomes will be for others and not just me!”

“Forging stronger bonds with the people who do this heart work is something I can rely on and use for the rest of my life. We’re all in this together.”

“I am not alone!”

“I think that the inter-generational knowledge transfer is hugely important. Most of the project leaders highlighted youth engagement as a point of success – speaking to the joy it brought to know that their hard work and knowledge will continue to benefit community members in future generations.”

“It’s not about production, it’s about the actions, the momentum in getting going and doing these positive things.”

“Strengths of the gathering all came from the people who were there. Everyone had something to contribute, share, and take away”



“It seemed to me that knowledge and inspiration that was shared between the communities was invaluable. It really seemed that people gained something that they were going to take back to their communities or projects that was going to make a big difference.”

“Thank you for the opportunity to take part in this gathering! Each trip I feel I learn more about myself and how to work with communities in a good way.”

“All the great presentations that each group made throughout the three days; they each demonstrated the will of the communities involved and each had a vision to bring change and hope to the people of their respective community.”

“It has inspired me to do more in my community.”

“I am deeply grateful for this beautiful experience. Thank you for bringing the young leaders on board. The whole event becomes much more meaningful and hopeful when we see young project leaders sharing their passion for food production and gardening and much more.”

“It was a gift to be a part of this gathering.”

“Wow, the more I listen to all the projects going on it's amazing and scary how we lost so much and now we are reviving lost trades and tradition amazing group of people.”

“There was wonderful opportunity for project leaders and other partners to share their knowledge with each other. This was one of the gatherings greatest strengths - it successfully fostered an environment of learning to inspire each participant with ways to bring the learnings back to their work.”

“Witnessing the love and commitment of people towards one another and the work they do; the strength of the people who showed up despite the difficult circumstances they were experiencing in their personal lives; the generosity of people with their knowledge; and the courage of people to share the more private aspects of their life experiences with people they had just met.”



Left: A quick visit to the local greenhouse to help out with a few repairs.

Right: Everyone listening intently during one of the presentations.

