

BARREN LANDS FIRST NATION

CARIBOU HUNT

LOCATION: Brochet, Manitoba

OBJECTIVE: “Re-skill” youth and adults in the community, improve traditional food access for elders and improve the livelihoods of hunters and the community.

Barren Lands First Nation/Brochet is on the north shore of Reindeer Lake, 1,000 km north of Winnipeg and north of the 57th parallel. Community members speak Cree and Dene. There are only seasonal roads, and flying to Thompson is expensive. The Northern Store is the only place to buy food. People hunt, fish and try to use cultural foods. Hunters receive support to fill community freezers for those who need traditional food sources such as wild meat and fish.

Successes

- Thirty-six caribou were taken for 16 Elders.
- The seven hunters traveled over five hours on skidoo to get caribou and were out on the land for three days and two nights. They were happy to have their costs paid and to receive a \$600 per hunter honorarium.
- The hunters did the cutting out on the land.
- Most people have freezers to store the meat.
- Three youth helped deliver caribou to Elders. They worked hard, did the heavy lifting and were given a small honoraria. They were proud to be part of sharing food with the Elders.
- Elders were happy to receive and share the meat with their families; most do not have skidoos and no longer go out on the land.

Challenges

- The community does not use caribou hides much anymore. In Lac Brochet there are people that still use the hides, often smoking them and making them into products.
- The grant arrived late, and money from another program had to be used temporarily.
- Caribou were a long distance from the community. It's not possible to project the location, timing, or herd whereabouts year to year.
- It was hard to distribute the meat evenly among community members as those delivering the meat did not know the different pieces of the animal.

Next steps

- Give each hunter responsibility to connect with, hunt for and deliver meat to a specific Elder.
- Increase the Health Program involvement.
- Use teachings about preparing caribou and making dried meat with the youth.
- Increase youth involvement in the hunt and in processing (some is done on the land, some cutting is done in the community).

