



Keeyask Generation Project
Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Monitoring Plan

Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Monitoring Report
ATK-2016-01



KEEYASK GENERATION PROJECT

ABORIGINAL TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

MONITORING REPORT

REPORT #ATK-2016-01

**ANNUAL REPORT:
YEAR 2 CONSTRUCTION**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Cree Nation communities known collectively as the partner First Nations: Tataskweyak Cree Nation and War Lake First Nation (working together as the Cree Nation Partners); Fox Lake Cree Nation and York Factory First Nation together with Manitoba Hydro formed the Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership (KHLP) to develop the Keeyask Project in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.

Similar to the two-track approach used by the Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership (KHLP) to identify and assess the anticipated effects of the Project, the KHLP is also using a two-track approach to determine the usefulness, accuracy and efficacy of monitoring and mitigation measures. One track consists of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) monitoring and the other track of western science monitoring. It is important to note that during the environmental assessment of Keeyask, the KHLP determined that ATK and western science would be given equal weight and that the intent of this principle is carried forward into Keeyask monitoring activities.

During the Keeyask Project planning and design process, the KHLP identified mitigation to avoid or reduce the Project's environmental effects and determined what needed to be monitored to verify the predicted effects. All of the mitigation and monitoring identified is included in a series of documents that describe in detail what needs to be done to protect the environment. Collectively these documents are called the Keeyask Environmental Protection Program.

1.1 ATK AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAM

The partner First Nations are involved in the Environmental Protection Program through a number of avenues including participating on project management committees, providing field workers for technical monitoring studies; and implementing community-specific ATK monitoring programs. Monitoring determines if the predictions about environmental effects in the Keeyask Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are correct and if mitigation measures are working as expected. There is a Monitoring Advisory Committee (MAC), made up of partner First Nation members and Manitoba Hydro staff. Members are responsible for reviewing and discussing the implementation and outcomes of the Environmental Protection Program, including social and economic monitoring activities. MAC meets every two months and advises the KHLP Board on environmental mitigation, monitoring and management issues.

Based on concerns from the partner First Nations about the Keeyask Project's effects on caribou in the region, a Keeyask Caribou Coordination Committee (KCCC) was formed as a sub-committee under the MAC, to serve as an effective way to coordinate Keeyask Project caribou monitoring and management activities with other stakeholders in the lower Nelson River region. The KCCC includes a MAC representative from each community, plus additional

community members and meets up to four times per year. The committee's objective is to coordinate, share and collaborate with other community and provincial groups to support the protection and long-term sustainability of caribou in the Keeyask region. The partner First Nations have a long-term vision for this committee to transition into a caribou co-management committee for the region, led by a representative from each of the communities and the government.

Based on the interest of the partner First Nations in the mitigation measures focusing on wetland creation and vegetation rehabilitation for the Keeyask Project, the MAC members also organized a wetland and vegetation rehabilitation workshop in November 2015. It was an open forum to discuss the progress being made on these mitigation measures and an opportunity for members of the partner First Nations to provide traditional knowledge and perspectives to the wetland development and vegetation rehabilitation programs.

Further to these activities, the partner First Nations are in the process of developing community-specific ATK monitoring programs for the Keeyask Project. Work on these programs is underway and is providing important perspectives and understandings about potential effects of the Project. The following summarizes the work being undertaken by each community with respect to the monitoring programs.

2.0 CREE NATION PARTNERS

2.1 AN OVERVIEW OF THE ATK MONITORING PROGRAM

Tataskweyak Cree Nation (TCN) and War Lake First Nation (WLFN), operating together as the Cree Nation Partners (CNP), have occupied the lands and waters of northern Manitoba since time immemorial. Over the centuries, CNP Members have accumulated (and continue to accumulate) invaluable traditional knowledge about their homeland ecosystem, including its many components and their relationships to each other and to themselves. CNP Members have also accumulated unique knowledge related to the effects of hydroelectric development, having lived in the midst of major developments for over five decades.

As expressed in the Cree Nation Partners' Environmental Evaluation Report for the Keeyask Generation Project (Keeyask), Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) is *"knowledge that reflects our experience, understanding, wisdom, values, beliefs, norms and priorities governing our relationships with Mother Earth and all her beings, derived and developed through living in our homeland ecosystem since time immemorial. ATK is inextricably linked to our culture and our worldview."*

Both TCN and WLFN negotiated Keeyask Adverse Effects Agreements with Manitoba Hydro. These agreements contain unique programs to address the concerns of CNP members identified during their environmental evaluation of Keeyask, including effects on their constitutionally protected right to exercise their customs, practices and traditions (such as hunting, fishing and trapping).

CNP are now in the process of developing a Keeyask ATK Monitoring Program. This program is intended to contribute to an ongoing assessment of the monitoring and mitigation measures for Keeyask. CNP intend to engage their members in a variety of activities to elicit meaningful discussion and action regarding the effects of Keeyask. These include:

- "On the land" monitoring activities, including the development of extensive photographic records of important cultural and spiritual locations;
- Including Elders and youth in on-site monitoring to facilitate the transmittal of ATK to young people;
- Key Person Interviews to determine the direct and indirect effects of Keeyask on all members;
- Open Houses/Information Sessions for members to ask questions and provide information;
- Identifying all unanticipated effects;
- Contributing to the development of mitigation measures for unanticipated effects; and
- Documenting the effects of Keeyask on resource users (hunting, fishing, and trapping).

CNP's participation in the monitoring programs will be essential to recording and interpreting ATK required for Manitoba Hydro's monitoring reports and will be an invaluable asset for identifying long-term environmental changes or unique environmental events that may otherwise be overlooked.

CNP continue to consult their members to develop an ATK Monitoring Program which will meaningfully contribute to the mitigation of Keeyask adverse effects on the environment and on their members. Currently, it is anticipated that CNP's ATK Monitoring Program will begin in the summer of 2016.

3.0 YORK FACTORY FIRST NATION

3.1 ASKIY NANAKACIHTAKEWIN STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

In September 2015, YFFN reached an initial contribution agreement with Manitoba Hydro and began activities under the Askiy Nanakacihtakewin Stewardship Program. The First Nation hired two staff members to develop and implement the program: a Stewardship Coordinator, and Stewardship Assistant.

Since September 2015, the Askiy Nanakacihtakewin Stewardship program staff have focused on several streams of activity:

- Organizing initial program activities including tours of the Keeyask site for members;
- Working with other First Nation monitoring programs to share ideas and experiences, and identify ways for the programs to collaborate;
- Surveying community members to identify priorities for the YFFN stewardship program;
- Developing a long-term stewardship plan for 2016/2017 and beyond;
- Attending Partnership meetings, including those for the Monitoring Advisory Committee and Caribou Coordination Committee, and Socio-Economic Monitoring Plan; and
- Attending other key community and cultural events, including community gatherings, and traditional ceremonies addressing the damage that construction is causing to *Askiy*.

The *Askiy Nanakacihtakewin Stewardship Program* continues to be focused on understanding and reconciling with the effects that the Keeyask project is having both on *Askiy* (the land, water, fish, and other beings), and on the *Ininiwak* (Cree People) of YFFN. As the program develops, work will aim to document *Ininiw Kiskenihtamowin* (Cree knowledge) and foster respectful dialogue between scientists and Cree knowledge-holders, as well as amongst Manitoba Hydro and the partner First Nations.

4.0 FOX LAKE CREE NATION

4.1 ASKI KESKENTAMOWIN MONITORING

Fox Lake Cree Nation (FLCN) created the Impact Assessment Unit (IAU) to assess and monitor the environmental effects of hydroelectric development through Aski Keskentamowin (Traditional Knowledge). During the assessment phase of Keeyask and other proposed hydro projects, Aski Keskentamowin helped identify and protect heritage sites and harvesting areas for geese, ducks, berries, caribou, medicinal plants, as well as other traditional activities and practices. Aski Keskentamowin will guide the IAU and traditional knowledge monitors in gathering information to build a resource library for the community. This resource library will be beneficial as an educational learning tool for the community, and help ensure the preservation of Fox Lake's traditional knowledge.

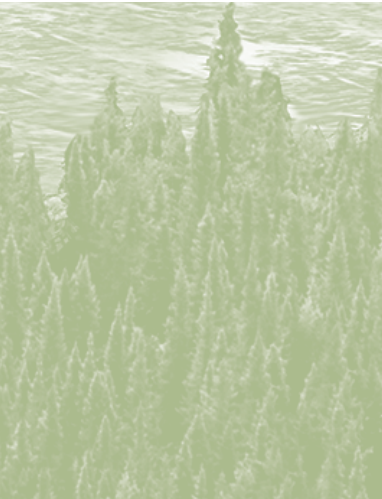
Fox Lake's goal is to ensure traditional knowledge is transferred from Elders to the youth to help the community to carry on this knowledge and harvesting practices. Throughout the 2016-2017 year more extensive traditional knowledge monitoring will be completed, along with continued collaboration with the other partner First Nations.

Planning and information gathering sessions were conducted in 2015 - 2016 and will continue to occur throughout the community monitoring program. This is to ensure frequent communication and traditional knowledge monitoring is completed with extensive community involvement. Elders and resource users participated in Keeyask site visits to see the impacts and extensive change to the land and view the stages of construction. During site visits wildlife tracks and sightings were documented. Local resource users present during some of these sites visits provided additional insight on the area and its current harvesting activity.

The IAU is monitoring the entire Keeyask Project footprint which includes the South Access Road, Keeyask Transmission Lines and all known heritage and cultural sites. These areas have been monitored since the beginning of construction and will continue to be monitored through the construction and operational phases of the Keeyask Project.

Regular monitoring updates are provided by the IAU to the community through the Fox Tracks newsletter, FLCN Facebook page, FLCN website and general notices. Regular follow-ups with Elders and resource users are done to ensure notification of construction activity, permit alterations, site access and harvesting rights, wildlife sightings and interaction, and safety of the Gillam community.

Fox Lake's IAU has a designated phone number community members and resource users can contact for information, report any concerns or issues, as well as request site follow-ups (431) 285-3149.



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